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Main works-

A saga of Sacrifices: Praja Parishad Movement in J&K

100 Documents: A reference book J&K, Mission Accomplished

A Compendium of Icons of Jammu & Kashmir & our Inspiration (English)

Jammu Kashmir ki Sangarsh Gatha (Hindi)

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WAIL OF THE VALE

(KASHMIR STINKS)

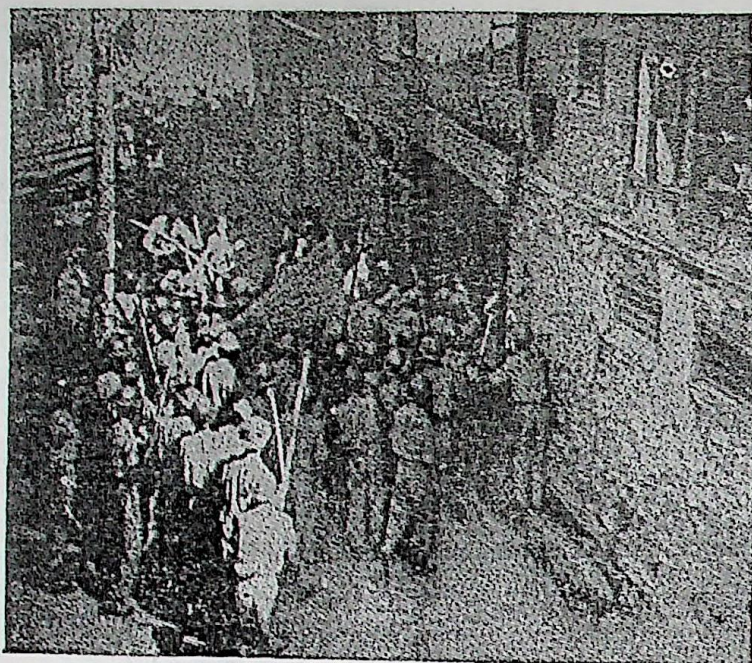
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Wail of the Vale
(Kashmir Stinks)

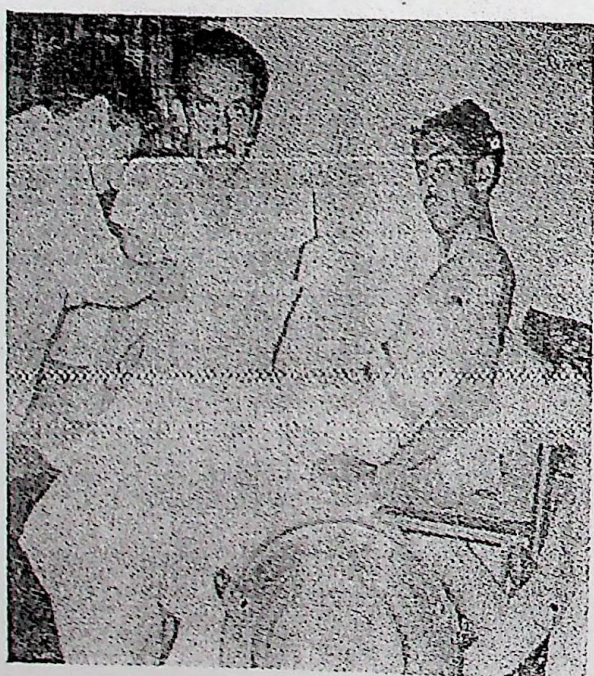
Books

POLICE ATROCITIES
on the Holy Day of August 15th.

KASHMIR HINDU ACTION COMMITTEE
(SRINAGAR)



Exposition of Police Barbarity at the only exit at Shitalnath.
"JALLIANWALA BAGH" TRAGEDY REPEATED.



Victims of Tear—Gas Shells

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Price :-

NOT FIXED

(Any help to the Kashmir sufferers will be appreciated.)

FOREWORD

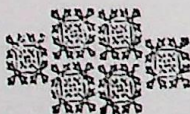
A word in explanation is necessary to the common man who may ask : Why retell a "too" well-know story. The bulletins issued by the All Kashmir Hindu Action Committee could not, in consequence of the repressive circumstances in which the Action Committee Functioned, reach the common man even in Kashmir. In spite of the concern expressed by the people throughout India, the correct facts of the repressive measures adopted by the "Control-room" of the party in power in Kashmir did not find publication. Whatever little objective Press reporting our Satyagrah received outside Kashmir made the Congress Chief of the Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh betray his nervousness over it during the debate in the State Legislature. Even the Chief Minister Mr. G. M. Sadiq often, in his public speeches, both inside and outside Kashmir, criticised the Indian Press for the same reason. We feel that the Kashmir Government's secret fund is paying its dividends, as could be seen recently from the reports of the Press Trust of India.

Human memory is proverbially short. Interested parties have begun to give currency to whispering rumours. Villians of the peace have begun telling the unsophisticated people in Kashmir, and outside as well, that the truth behind the scenes is only known to them. Even during the tenure of the Satyagrah & specially after it communal & political undertones have been ascribed to our Satyagrah by professional politicians. Debates in the State Assembly and speeches of the men in power in Kashmir, and silence of the Congress High-ups outside Kashmir, betrayed different angles of approach to this simple struggle for survival of the minorities in Kashmir. They smelt rats in every word of the Press and the Platform inside and outside Kashmir. Even the Government agencies of Information or communication were nightmares disturbing Syed Mir Qasim & Co.

The very glare of this sad story has made an objective view difficult of the events leading to it and of the happenings during Satyagrah. Sympathisers outside Kashmir, as is evident from their letters, are anxious to know the why and the how of this surprisingly sudden upsurge in Srinagar and its environs. Jammu re-echoed the cry for the survival of the minorities in the Kashmir

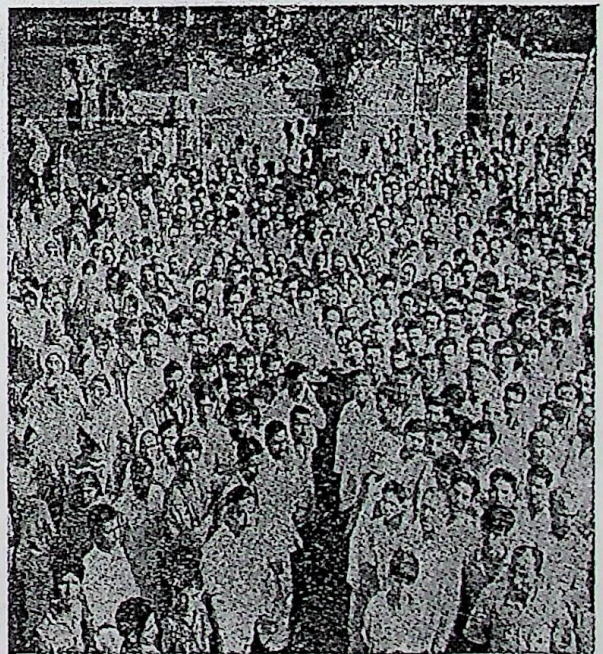
Valley and this reverberated elsewhere in India. Timely intervention of the Union Home Minister should have nipped the budding mischief of the professional politicians, but it gave only a dangerous turn to the events as manoeuvred. Had a purposeful man intervened, the minor girl should have been back in the lap of the widowed mother rather than in the embrace of the abductor. There should have been no Satyagrah, no lathi charges, no casualties and deaths, no curfew, no arson, no loot and no murders. And, in the words of a Plebiscite member - of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislature, there should have been nothing like "What Pakistan could not achieve in Kashmir for 20 years, the misguided Chief Minister did it in 20 days." Communal virus has permeated deep into the social veins.

Who can say whether this event is, or is not, a fortunate incident? The lid would not have been off the simmering cauldron of genuine grievances of the minorities in Kashmir. Abduction of the minor girl sparked off the struggle of a new, challenging idea with the old one that has come to stay as the destiny of the minorities in Kashmir i. e. discrimination in the favour of the majority community at the cost of the minority in contravention of the guarantees of the Indian and the State Constitutions.





"Shaheed" MAHARAJ KISHEN RAZDAN
The victim of 25th August inhuman Police Brutality.



Funeral Procession of "Shaheed" Maharaj Kishen Razdan



‘ARTI’ of Lassa Koul Badami Victim of Krala Khud Lathi charge



“Shaheed” Gopinath Handoo Fatally wounded at Kralakhud

“THE UNFORTUNATE EVENT”

One Parmeshwari Handoo, a minor and the only daughter of a destitute Hindu widow of Rainawari, a suburb of Srinagar, was under stress of extreme indigence driven to take up the petty job of a sales girl in the Co-operative Departmental Stores, Srinagar. One Ghulam Rasool Kant worked as a Cashier in the same Stores and received office cash from the Sales Girl, as in other cases, daily at odd hours. During these official contacts he used all nefarious means to pressurise the virgin sales girl. Her cash was occasionally declared short, or the notes were unacceptable, or the coins were counterfeit.

This destitute girl was pressurised in other ways as well e.g. stoppage of her pay for months together and allotment of late duty hours. The poor Girl's home was four miles away from her place of duty and going at late hours from 9 to 10 in the night did the trick for these malicious intriguers.

The Co-operative Departmental stores was started with a Kashmiri Pandit as the Manager. One Shri Ghulam Hassan Qasba, during this period became notorious in consequence of a burglary of nearly one lac of rupees from the Central Co-operative Bank Srinagar while he was the Administrator. Owing to his influence in the Government hierarchy he was rewarded with an increase in his status by promotion to a senior grade and later posted as Manager of the Co-operative Departmental Stores. He took a leading part in siding and abetting Ghulam Rasool Kant Cashier in seducing the pressurised girl. He in his official capacity covered up the embazzlement of Rs. 1,472/- misappropriated by the Cashier during this period. The amount was later refunded by some Tablig Orgnaisation of the majority community through some individual long after Ghulam Rasool Kant had slipped away from service and had been suspended for absence. In this manipulated situation with this background of the characters involved, the minor girl Parmashwari Handoo, was found missing by

her mother on 3rd August, 1967, when she did not return home. Concerned, the poor mother went to the jurisdictional police station at Rainawari with the report that her daughter, aged 17, was missing from that morning. The abducted girl and the abductor were both traced on August 5, 1967, from a house, not the parental house of Ghulam Rasool Kant, at Wazapora in the interior of the city inhabited by only the members of the majority community. Wazapora besides, is the rendezvous of Pro-Pakistani element and the Islam Tablig Organisation. This Mohalla is in fact the Headquarters of the Head Moulvis of Kashmir, a scion of which family, Moulvi Farvoq, has lately become conspicuous for his anti-Indian activities. As to the citadel in which Parmeshwari Handoo is kept after she was handed over by the Police to the abductor may better be expressed in the words (translated into English) of Mr. Shamim Ahmed Shamim, an M.L.A. of the State Legislature. This statement of Shri Shamim appeared in the "Aayina", a Urdu Weekly, of 31st August, 1967.

" reached an unknown place at dead of night talking to some newspaper Editors and friends. While passing through the dirty lanes at such a late hour, it was difficult for me to guess as to where I was. My companion knocked at a door. A sound from inside was heard asking as to who it was "It is I" "Wait a bit." A man came out after few moments. He talked to my friend for a while in a friendly tone. I guessed that he was telling my companion that it was difficult. On second thoughts he told us to follow him, and we did. We had to pass through many a lane and he led us to the compound of a house. Leaving us there, he went in. He returned after a few minutes, assured us that they will try and asked us to enter the house. Carpets in the room, we entered were suggestive of the owner's position. A chair was in one of the corners and curtains were hanging on the windows. We waited there for half an hour but nobody told us whether we could talk to Parvin Akhtar (Parmishwari Handoo's muslim name) or not. Some time after two young men entered the room and expressed that the matter was complicated. They said her visit is not free of danger and

your going there is also dangerous. We did not want that whereabouts of Parvin should be known to Police or any stranger. Feeling assured with us, they departed with the promise that they would produce Parvin Akhtar. Sometime after the door opened and a girl with a black 'Burqa' entered the room."

The reader will kindly bear with us for the above digression of the above case. The description is necessary to indicate the criminal organisation behind this seduction case influenced by Tabliq considerations. The abducted girl having been found at Wazapora, strangely enough, she was kept in custody at Maharaj Ganj Police Station, three miles away from the jurisdictional Police Station at Rainawari where the mother had lodged the complaint. The investigation was taken up by the Maharaj Ganj Police Station where the Officer incharge was a Muslim and not by the Rainawari Police Station where the Officer incharge was a Hindu and where the FIR was filed. The girl was later taken to Khanyar Police Station, an intermediary Police unit, between 5th and 6th August. This place is again the headquarters of anti-Indian organisation and a place where not a single Hindu resides. The place was within the easy reach of the abductor and his sympathisers. The repeated protests of the Widowed and bereaved mother for return of her daughter and for investigation by the Rainawari Police Station was disregarded. The girl was kept in Police custody and the abductor was bailed out on the very day of his arrest (Reportedly a relative of the Chief Minister, who is also an M.L.A. was instrumental in this, behind the scenes). The school certificate of age of the girl produced by the mother was surreptitiously ignored and the police took pains to seek support from medical examination of the girl, besides concocting Municipal records to declare her a major, at least about the age of 18. The girl was handed over back to the abductor unlawfully even before the Radiological examination was taken up. Extreme care was taken not to associate any non-muslim in the police investigation. The girl's mother was allowed to meet her for brief intervals in the presence of the Muslim Police officials. Nor was any other Hindu allowed to meet the girl except in presence of the Muslim officials. The investigating police agency appropriated to itself the powers of the Court of

Law, took its own decision about the age of the girl, and let the abductor go scot free taking away the abducted girl. News went round at the time that the officer incharge of the investigation accompanied the girl to the abductor's residence and was treated to a sumptuous dinner. Agitated over the scandalous performance of the investigating Agency there was spontaneous reaction and resentment among the public in general and this gave birth to the Hindu Action Committee. To invite the attention of the Government peaceful satyagrah was decided to be launched. As to how the Government resorted to suppression and repression will be discussed in the chapter following. The issues connected with the abduction case are mentioned here. The Chief Minister G. M. Sadiq speaking in the State Legislative Assembly on August 17, 1967 made the following statement (relevant extracts only reproduced) :

 HE Police investigations into this matter have brought to my notice some conclusions which I state below without, in any way, taking a view on them or committing the Government to the veracity of these conclusions since most of them are subject to judicial scrutiny :

- i) A complaint was lodged on 3rd August, 1967, by one Lady Smt. Dhanwati, widow of late Shri Narayan Joo Handoo, with Police Station Rainawari that her daughter Kumari Parmeshwari, aged 17 years, was missing since 11-00 a.m. that day and was suspected to have been abducted for immoral purposes by an employee of the Government Co-operative Departmental Stores, where she was serving as a sales girl. The Police Station Rainawari registered the case under Section 366 RPC and after search by the Investigating Officer, the girl along-with one Ghulam Rasool Kanth against whom the complaint had expressed suspicion were recovered on 5th August 1967 and questioned separately. Smt. Parmeshwari, allegedly stated to the Police that she was a major and had, of her own free will, embraced Islam

on 20th of July, 1967 and married, again of her free will, one Shri Ghulam Rasool Kanth, on the 28th of July, 1967.

- ii The girl is also alleged to have stated that she had given an affidavit before the Second Additional Munsiff on 29th July, 1967, stating therein that she had of her free will embraced Islam and married Shri Ghulam Rasool Kanth.
- iii The police sent her to the S. M. H. S. Hospital Sgr. for medical examination on 5th August and a lady doctor after examining her stated 'the girl' appears to be about 20 years of age. For confirmation by X-ray the girl should come on Monday" (7th August, 1967).
- iv It is reported that same evening the police had Shri Ghulam Rasool Kanth bailed out and on the reported insistence of the girl, restored her to this individual on the 6th August, 1967.
- v With regard to the question about the girl's age, the Police investigating agency have reported the following.
 - a Subsequent to and as suggested in the medical examination of the 5th August, 1967, the opinion of the Radiologist was sought and he is reported to have recorded as follows "I am of the opinion that her age is about 18 years".
 - b The date of birth of the girl as entered in the admission register of Arya Girls High School where she had studied is reported to be 28th July, 1950 which is also the date entered in the records of the J & K Board of Secondary Education. According to this her age would be 17 years on 28th July, 1967.
 - c The Municipality records do not show any entry about her birth in

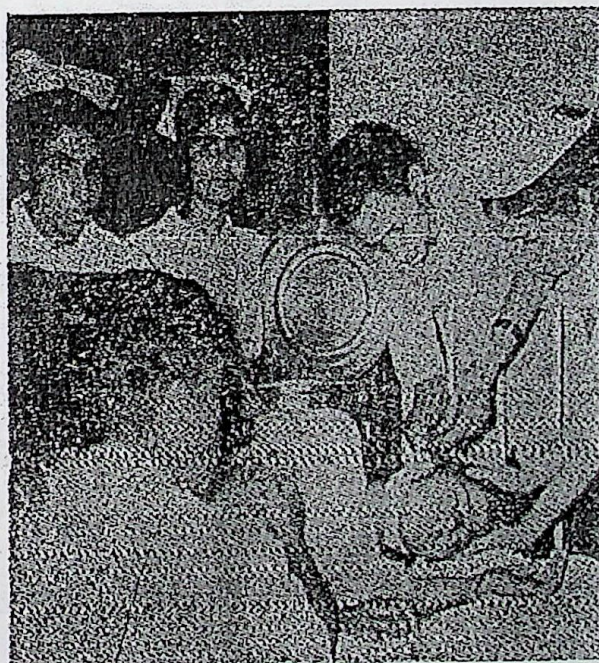
July, 1950 but there is reportedly an entry regarding the birth of a daughter to Narayan Joo (girl's father) on 30th Jeth Samvat 2004 (about 11th June, 1947).

Doubts have been raised about the correctness of the manner & conclusions reached in these investigations. It may happen that mistakes have been made and I am prepared to have these doubts about the manner of investigations looked into, without prejudice to the judicial proceedings where the conclusions may be subject to scrutiny. It is also alleged, similarly, that a coercive pressure was brought to bear on this girl, while she was serving the Departmental store, over a period of few months. This also will be gone into immediately. I assure all concerned that in case any of these allegations are established, an enquiry, my Government will unhesitatingly take whatever action is indicated by way of redressal."

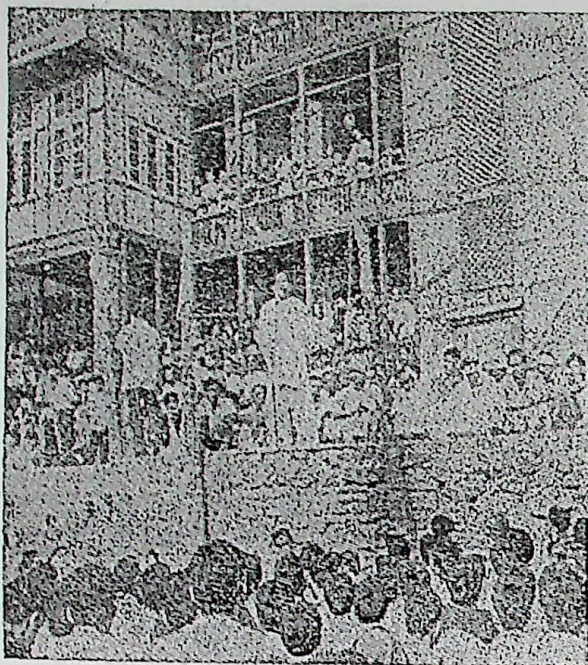
The Chief Minister has unwittingly confirmed the facts of the case, the guilty performance of the police and at the same time has exposed himself for having the brief for the police. In the Statement it is brought out that Kumari Parmeshwari Handoo allegedly stated to the police that she was a major and has embraced Islam on 20th July, 1967 and married of her free will, one Shri Ghulam Rasool Kanth on 28th July, 1967. One should pity such intelligence which should accept the police story unabashedly, giving out that a minor girl could be converted on 20th July, 1967, married on 28th July, and still after marriage remain with her mother upto 3rd August and continue to be called Parmeshwari Handoo in her official records till she was suspended. How absurd ? Conversion in the Jama Masjid, as alleged later, without becoming public, giving an affidavit in the court on 29th without attracting public attention and marriage without living together is a mockery and only fools can believe it. The Chief Minister missed to notice that in his statement he had unwittingly exposed a glaring fact i. e. as to how before radiological confirmation on 7th August, 1967, as medically advised by the Lady Doctor the abducted girl was released on 6th August, 1967 and handed over to the abductor. Was the police



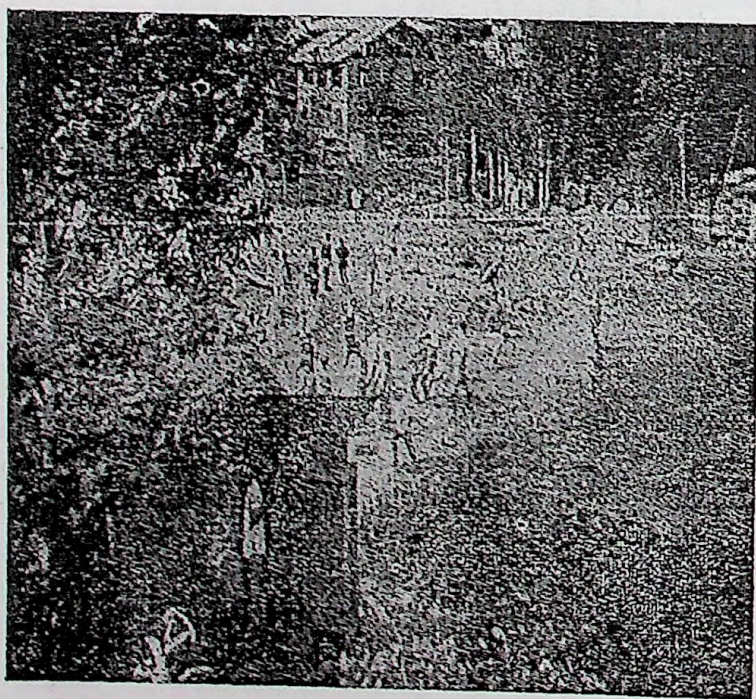
The President, Kashmir Hindu Action Committee,
Shri Gopi Kishen addressing a public meeting.



An injured lady undergoing head operation
at Rattan Rani Hospital.



Shri Premnath Ghasi, Vice President
Kashmir Hindu Action Committee
addressing a public meeting.



Police hirelings collecting Stones for pelting
Shitalnath crowd on 25th august.

influenced by corruption or by political influences behind the scene or by communal fanaticism or by all these factors. The Chief Minister frankly admitted that mistakes had been made and that he was prepared to have these doubts about the manner of investigations looked into. He also admitted that coercive pressure was brought to bear on the girl while she was serving in the Departmental store. He also assured the State Legislature that this all would be gone into *immediately*. It is now 3 months since he made the statement in the Legislature. His promised immediate action regarding police investigations and coercive pressure in the Departmental store brought on the girl, have yet to be taken.

About this time the Chairman of the J & K Legislative Council wrote a personal letter to the Chief Minister Mr. G. M. Sadiq and in it he wrote:

“N the beginning of the trouble I thought it my duty to give the concerned people the benefit of lead and guidance with the ultimate object of arriving at a settlement of a vexatious and irritating problem honourably and effectively, but a compelling advice from the Congress quarters to dis-associate myself made me, unwillingly though, remain aloof from the entire scene.”

He also suggested that :-

“OW that the case is pending in a court of law, it would be desirable that the girl is separated from the company of the boy and put at the disposal of some neutral respectable agency till a decision is announced by the court or both girl and the boy in the interest of the public security and peace, be kept under detention separately under proper care and safe custody.”

As to what has actually happened is a sad story. It was at the instance of the Government quarters, specifically the Chief Minister, that the widowed

mother of the abducted girl had moved the court under section 552 R. P. C. to recover her minor daughter. Mr. Y. B. Chavan advised us to wait for the decision of the Court. As to what the Court has done so far gives us a feeling that a man, whether he be in the Police or in the judiciary cannot rise above his communal bias. It is now over three months that the case was taken to the court and has now reached a stage when it is to be taken up to the High Court for the very preliminaries. The virgin abducted girl continues to be in the clasp of the abductor

In the beginning persons interested from the congress, the state secretariat services and from amongst the Ministers conspired to sabotage and torpedo the court case by approaching certain traitors of the minority community. Luckily, before the mischief could be done, the plot was unearthed and exposed. By this time certain leaders from outside Kashmir and members of the Parliament met the Chief Minister and discussed this vexatious problem with him. He suggested to them that the mother of the abducted girl may file a suit in the court that since the life of her daughter was in danger, she should be kept in the mother's custody pending court's verdict. We never knew that this too was a deceit. The mother accordingly moved an application in the court. On August 24 when the application was posted to be taken up, Srinagar city witnessed tremendous Govt. sponsored demonstrations, the demonstrators comprising Home Guards in civilian clothes and other such agencies. Raising anti-national and pro-sadiq slogans (Abbhi abhi khabar aayee, Sadiq Hamara Bhai) the demonstrators who ransacked all the principal chowks and mobbed the court premises, were led and addressed by leading Congress workers like the Block President Khanyar, Vice President Pardesh Youth Congress and Personal Assistant of Syed Mir Qasim, the Chief of the Pradesh Congress Committee. In the court itself it was the public prosecutor who prayed that before the application is taken up, the court should decide about changing the Venue as there was a serious threat to law and order. This criminal case of abduction is in effect becoming a civil suit that may run for years by which time the virgin girl may be a mother.

BLOODY AUGUST 1967

The criminal neglect of the Police Officers, brought by the leaders of the Hindu Action Committee to the notice of the State Congress Cabinet, went unheeded. The Government betrayed its partisan and callous attitude, not expected of a people's representative Government. This sparked off peaceful protest meetings and Satyagrah to attract attention of the Government which drunk with power, resorted to lathi charges, bursting of tear gas and short range shells, stone pelting and firings on non-violent unarmed crowds of women, girls, boys, and men without any offence.

In the earlier stages, the victims of lathi-charges and tear-gas attacks were, under oral instructions of the men at the top, refused admission to the Government Hospital with the purpose of hushing up the results of their brutal atrocities, but a private institution, Rattan Rani Hospital, kept its doors open to these unfortunate victims. All the rooms, wards, varandhas and passages in this Hospital of meagre means were overcrowded with the injured persons of both the sexes. The bleeding wounds of men & women, boys and girls at the Hospital were eloquent witnesses of the atrocities of the 15th August followed by the Kashmir "Jalliana walla" Bagh" enacted in the Shitalnath lane by the Kashmir Armed Police on 25th August 1967, when members of the minority community, after the congregation was over, were returning to their homes in the city. Those who have seen "Jallianawalla Bagh" in Amritsar, surrounded by buildings on all sides with the narrow lane as its only approach, can visualise the analogy with the Shitalnath Grounds surrounded by ditches, full of dirty sewage waters on all sides, and with only one exit by a narrow lane.

Our Satyagaraha has been much maligned by interested parties. The Chief Minister in his statement in State Legislature on 31st. August 1967, went to the length of saying that the Government had been very kind and gracious

to us. We, therefore, feel that a chronological description of the atrocities perpetrated on us is necessary.

7th. August, 1967.

The news of the abducted girl having been handed back to the abductor on 6th August 1967 without even the medically advised radiological examination on 7th August 1967 went like wild-fire through out the city. As a result of this spontaneous reaction and resentment among the people gave expression at Rainawari, the sector of the city where from the minor girl had been abducted; There was a peaceful assemblage of the Minority Community on 7th August 1967. It was lathi charged causing injuries to several people. Four persons were arrested on spot to discourage the community from expressing its resentment. One wonders if this assemblage was lathi charged and forcibly dispersed on the excuse of prohibitory orders enforced, why the administration was a helpless witness on 7th June, 1967 when mobs of the majority community at the outbreak of Israile-Arab war set even the Churches on fire under the very nose of the Inspector General of Police, the Ministers and just close to the official residence of the Chief Minister. On 7th June, 1967 even European lady tourists in Kashmir were maltreated in such a manner that any Government worth the name should have resigned and not put the country to shame in the eyes of the International Community.

Outraged by the attitude adopted by the Govt. a much larger assembly gathered at Shitalnath to protest against the happenings.

8th. August, 1967.

Hindu Shopkeepers observed complete hartal on the day and a protest meeting was held at Shitalnath under the Chairmanship of Shree S. N. Fotadar, who incidently, besides being a Kashmiri Pandit, is Chairman of the Legislative

Council of the State. A resolution demanding the return of the abducted girl was passed and speeches condemning the govt.'s high-handedness were made. The attitude of the Government demanded collective action and, consequently, the All Kashmir Hindu Action Committee was constituted. After this assemblage dispersed, but while going out of the Shitalnath premises people were mercilessly lathi charged by the Police causing serious injuries to several people. The crowds were lathi charged at Habba Kadal which is half a mile below Shitalnath. A dozen persons were also arrested during the day. During the night following some members of the Action Committee, besides several other persons were arrested.

9th. August, 1967.

At the neglect of the Government for return of the abducted girl, tension, increased in the city. People wonder as to why such a small affair should have been complicated by the Government. Hindu Shopkeepers and business centres, including Sikhs, observed complete hartal on the day. Ruthless atrocities let loose on the minorities were condemned in a meeting held under the auspices of the All Hindu Action Committee at Shitalnath. Students also felt moved and their Federation in a meeting condemned the partisan attitude of the Govt. Other organisations likewise in Kashmir moved resolutions and expressed resentment.

10th. August, 1967.

The persons arrested during the previous three days were subjected to inhuman treatment in jail where they were detained. The news of this inhuman treatment sent a wave of anger through the people already agitated and disappointed at the attitude of the Government. A meeting was held at Shitalnath on the day to express grief over the happenings. As is natural on such occasions the hardships and injustice meted out to the minority during two decades

since 1947 were discussed in the meeting. It was felt that the minority community had perhaps no place in its own homeland where the Government was openly hostile and worked only on communal considerations. The insecure conditions in which the minority community found itself were discussed by the speaker after speaker. Discrimination by the men at power against the members of the community in all walks of life was narrated with open grief.

It was felt and expressed that we had patiently suffered all this injustice and discriminatory acts only in the hope that accession of the State to the Indian Union was otherwise at stake. The indignities suffered by this small community with resultant economic distress were patiently undergone during the last two decades. It was felt that an inroad into the culture, the traditions, the religious practices and above all the honour of women folk was too high a price in the wake of the accession to the Indian Union. It placed too great a strain on our patriotism. The manner in which the seduction of this minor girl was handled by the Govt, provoked the common decision to launch satyagraha either to mend the matter or to end our humiliating conditions in this area. This became the main theme of the speeches made from this day onwards.

11th. August, 1967.

Atrocities of the Govt. coupled with its neglected attitude in restoring the abducted girl, compelled the agitated community to offer satyagraha by courting arrests in the batches of five persons, Accordingly the first batch of five volunteers arrive at the New Secretariat building, shouting slogans "Bharat Mata Ki Jai, Hindu Muslim Sikh Unity Zindabad." This batch of volunteers having been arrested and removed from the scene, the gathering dispersed. Some hirelings of the Govt. molested a young Hindu Girl near the Neelam Cinema, which is barely two furlongs away from the New Secretariat building. The Hindus on the spot intervened and this unexpected resistance annoyed the hirelings. In no time a large gathering of the majority community started

pelting stones and beating the Hindus present on the spot. The wooden railings from the nearby premises were handy and were indiscriminately used on the people. To the amazement of every person the Kashmir Armed Police joined hands with the hooligans and ruthlessly beat up every individual who came in their way. As a result of this indiscriminate onslaught many persons were injured, including many teenagers. The news went round and there was instantaneous hartal of the Hindu shops throughout the City. Soon after a meeting was held at Shitalnath and the atrocities of the Police were condemned.

The State Assembly was in session and the opposition tried to raise a discussion on the law and order situation in the city. The Treasury Benches defeated the move with the collusion of the speaker who is a creature of the party in power.

12th. August 1967.

The second batch of Satyagrahis of five courted arrest on this day in front of the State Assembly, when the assembly was in session. The opposition on this day again raised the issue for a discussion but the ruling party, as usual, evaded it. Later a mammoth gathering appeared at Shitalnath and a meeting was held under the auspices of the Hindu Action Committee. News of the atrocities had by now travelled across to Jammu where also protest meetings and demonstrations were held.

13th. & 14th. August, 1967

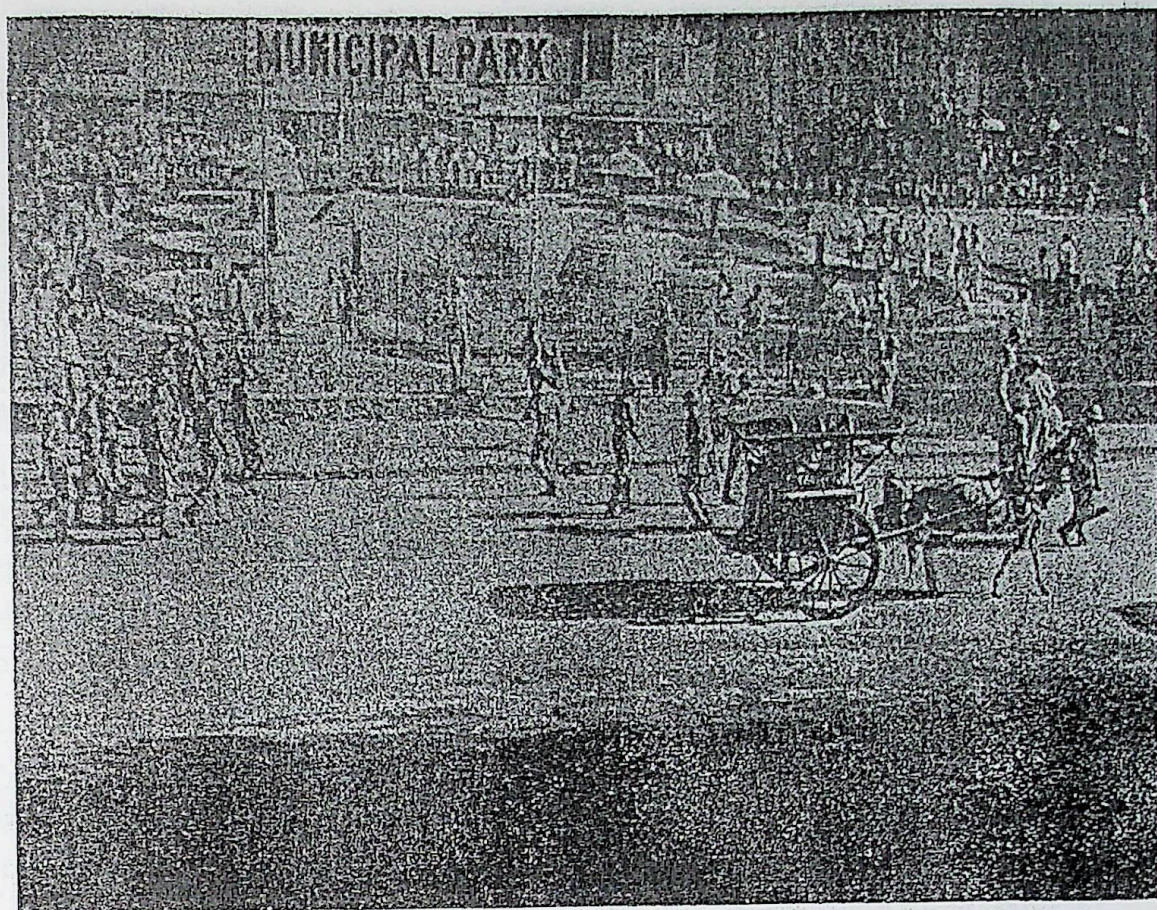
By 13th August the Govt. attitude had stiffened and repressive measures were intensified. The arrested persons were ruthlessly tortured at the Police Stations and at the Jail. Outside on the roads indiscriminate lathi charges and tear gas charges on the demonstrators and satyagrahis shouting "Bharat Mata Ki Jai, Hindu MusJim Unity Zindabad" became common. On 13th the third

batch of Satayagrahis courted arrest at Habakadal & on 14th at Lalchowk, Amirakadal. On 13th the Kashmir Armed Police ran wild and injured a large number of men, women & children, who were refused admission in the State Hospital. Even the Hospital and the Red Cross ambulances were denied to them. On 14th the vindictive violence of the Police excited a section from the Police force to the extent that there was a mutual scuffle among the members of the Police themselves.

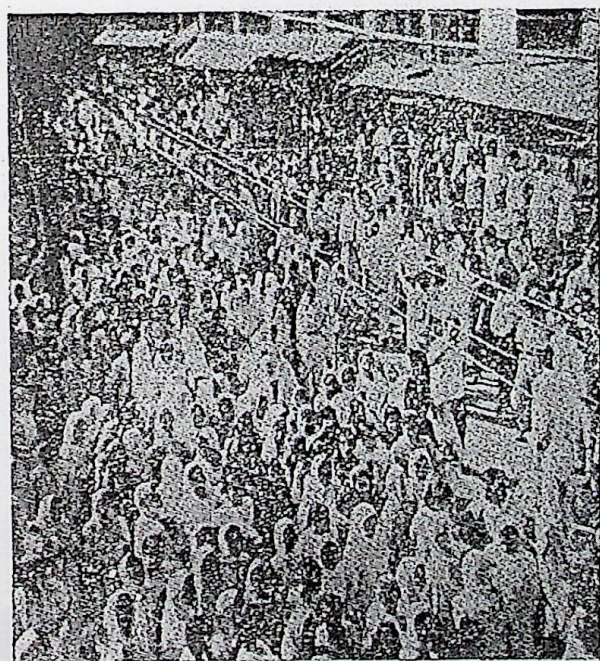
The tempo of arrests during nights also increased. The Police entered houses and took away people without any warrants. While making arrests, they did not refrain from using obscene language with respectable ladies. They went to the extent of unlawfully removing personal effects of the people, they came across in the homes they went in. Lathis were used by Kashmir Armed Police not on the lower portions of the bodies as should have been, but indiscriminately on the skulls and on the necks of the persons. Teargas Shells as well as short range shells were thrown neither into the air nor on the ground but directly on the bodies of the persons. They had evidently been given a free hand by the Government, or by the Office bearers of the Congress Organisation, who in fact superseded the effeminate Government for this period.

15th August, 1967-Independence Day gifts.

A further batch of five satayagrahis was to offer satayagraha at the Regal Chowk in front of the new extinct Regal Cinema house, gutted during Holi Relic excitement in Dec. 1963. Their arrest was purposely delayed obviously to create chaos on the sacred day of Independence. While the country was celebrating the Independence Day, the minorities in Kashmir were greeted with ruthless lathi charges, teargas shells and stone pelting. The vindictive violence of the Government through its police was not restricted only to lathi charges, but on this sacred day brutality of the Govt. through its hooligans went to the extent of throwing acid on women, girls and other peaceful demonstrators at the



A Further Scene of Police atrocities on August 15th.



Women Mourners



Brutally injured Teen—ager



A woman victim of Lathi Charge



Even Teen-agers were not spared

Regal Chowk under the very nose of the I.G.P.. The gas shells, that were used were of such type that are not meant for use on the civilian population, but for war purposes only. The lathi charges had become so indiscriminate that numerous persons including young boys, girls and ladies bled and fainted on the road sides. The persons who fled to the near by temple were persued by the police inside the temple premises and beaten there. The worst tragedy was that most of the injured were hurt on the head and neck and Kashmir police blocked all their escape routes, when tear gas shells were exploded very frequently in the midst of loyal peaceful Hindu gathering on the spot. Even the High Rank Police & C.I.D. officers were seen using lathis and shells quite indiscriminately. It was a horrible scene, which scared away even the visitors who used to haunt the site and one could not remove the victims easily to the Hospital and they had to lie there unattended till late hours. Though Govt. quarters were moved for help at the time, even the supply of any ambulance was denied and the State Red Cross branch nearby remained silent. The Satyagrahis were arrested late and with them even a teenaged girl was lifted on the spot.

On this day one of the victims of the lathi charge of 11th August, 1967, Shri Gopi Nath Handoo died. The news of his death created consternation all round. There was a large gathering at Shitalnath to express grief over the situation, which now culminated in deaths also.

The indiscriminate night arrests had by now increased and people were dragged, with or without reason, at the reports of mere third parties. Police had gone even to arrest persons who had long ago died. Such persons had been nominated from ration ticket registers at the ghats. Indian press which was silent upto this day had now felt moved to bring the events in Kashmir to the notice of the Public outside Kashmir.

16th to 22nd August, 1967.

Satyagraha developed momentum and batches of five satyagrahis continued to offer satyagraha in different sectors of the city on different dates.

The gas shells that were used on 17th at Lalchowk, on 18th at Harisingh High Street, on 19th on the Telephone Exchange Road, on 20th at Rainawari, on 21st at Karanmarg and on 22nd at the Regal Cinema Chowk. They were arrested as soon as they appeared on the scene among huge gatherings of men, women, boys and girls, all shouting slogans "Bharat Mata Ki Jai", Hindu Muslim Unity Slogans. For the first 24 hours after their arrest the satyagrahis were subjected to all kinds of inhuman treatment in Police Stations, till they were transferred to the Central Jail. In Central Jail on one of these days the Superintendent of Police let loose the criminals within the jail to belabour these arrested persons.

Protest meetings were a daily feature. Hartal also continued both within and outside the city. It was during this period again that the Chief Minister was apprised of the grave concern on what had been happening in the city and as to how the Satyagrahi arrested were maltreated and innocent boys, girls and women and others got subjected to the police excesses and were seriously injured. Lathi charges on the public and night arrests, without warrants, continued to remain daily features during these days. Protest meetings naturally also continued.

In this period excitement began to increase among Hindus and the urge for expressing resentment was aggravated by the provocative barbarous attitude of the police and the administration. The All Kashmir Hindu Action Committee resolved in a meeting held on 20th August, 1967 and made it known that thence onwards only the Action Committee would be the sole representative organisation empowered to negotiate with the Government and attend to other social, economic, religious and other affairs of the community.

During this period Shri Ragbir Shastri M.P., Prof. Shri Ram Singh, and Shri Tej Bhadur Kaul, Secretary Hindu Mahasabha, paid a visit to Srinagar and after an on the spot investigation found that the administration had in fact played into the hands of communal forces and aggravated the situation by

resorting to use of violence on a small minority, which was asking for nothing but the restoration of the minor girl to her widowed mother. They also addressed a meeting in Shitalnath in which they gave expression to their sympathy with the oppressed minority.

August 22, 1967 — turning point.

All the day Shri Balraj Madhok, President of All India Jan Sangh, had had certain meetings and discussions with the Chief Minister. He came to Shitalnath on this day to express his sympathy with the minority community in this hour of their trial. He addressed the gathering there, condemned the conversion and forcible marriage of the Hindu minor girl and the manner in which it was brought out by the abetment of the Police and Government Officers. Speakers denounced the partisan attitude of the Government and the atrocities perpetrated on this small minority.

Certain significant developments had taken place before Shri Balraj Madok spoke at Shitalnath. The leadership of the Congress rank and file, found themselves divided over the manner of handling the situation. An influential, though not numerically superior group which included top Ministers and some other Congress leaders, had constituted their own "Control Room" to deal sternly with the satyagraha which offered possibilities of winning over a section of the Muslim population. Their aim was clearly to create a new base for the Congress, as the Congress leadership in Kashmir is already finding it increasingly difficult to win more followers. Their bogus membership is already exposed.

To those in the administration and the party who favoured stern measures, Mr. Madhok's speech came in handy. Curiously enough what this group considered objectionable in Mr. Madhok's speech is as follows "culled from Govt. records" as per Hindustan Times of 18th September, 1967 ;

“**N**

obody can separate Kashmir from India. Kashmir's accession to India, based on Maharaja Hari Singh's instrument, is final and irrevocable. If any section of the population harps on plebiscite or wants Kashmir to become a part of Pakistan, he had better leave the country.”

Before the diehards became active in the administration, Mr. Sadiq had described Mr. Madhok's attitude as constructive”. The official spokesman denied that there had been any outside hand in the agitation.

Soon after, attitudes changed and the leadership deprived of what little mass base it had started seeing an invisible hand behind the happenings.

23rd & 24th. August, 1967.

Unfortunately, after 22nd something went wrong on the Govt. side. The retaliation against Hindus took the shape of open incitement to Muslim sentiment. A section of Muslims backed by the State Congress and by some Political Conference workers, was organised to counter our satayagraha. As if natural, the majority community was stirred to arrange hartal and express resentment in a violent attitude. Tension thus created increased as the day advanced. Henceforth the speeches made by the Chief Minister and the Congress highups were provocative. Agents of the Govt. including some Ministers and congress highups were seen during the night of 23rd. distributing money to provoke a communal flareup. By the morning of 24th, when the suit filed by the abducted girl's mother was to come up for a hearing in the court of the Additional District Magistrate, the Muslim masses had been organised by paid agents to observe bandh. Thereafter they moved about in processions shouting anti-national and pro-pakistani slogans and hurling abuses on the Indian Union and the minority community in Kashmir. Effigies of Shri Balraj Madhok were shoe-beaten and burnt at many a place. Shops were stoned and in many cases the shop-

keepers escaped beating by immediately closing their shops or by bolting themselves inside the shops. The approaches to the premises of the Court of A.D.M. were surrounded by huge mobs. Their gathering was considered not a violation of the prohibitory order even though the entire traffic in this busiest part of the city was closed for the day. The police was even not to be seen anywhere on the road, though it was present in strength nearby within the court premises, but curiously enough remained silent spectator. Infact, the mobs felt encouraged to shout any slogan and hurl any abuse. The Kashmir Armed Police in plain clothes, a muslim members of the Youth Congress and Govt. Servants and Congress members freely mixed up in this job to compel the Court to abandon the case for the day. The public prosecutor had to put in an application for change of the venue of the Court, which the Court readily accepted. (Please see previous chapter in this connection also) Trucks of the Govt. Transport Department were seen carrying hooligans from Industrial Areas to Lal Chowk and Hari Singh High Street, who reinforced the already violent mobs. One of the truck was marked to have No. J & K 6914.

The 24th of August was otherwise also gloomy as by then data had been collected giving the upto date position of arrests, lathi-charges and gas shell victims etc. These figures upto the evening of 23rd August were:

i)	Satyagrahis arrested ending	
	23rd evening (in batches of 5 a day)	65
ii)	Others arrested.	187
iii)	Lathi charges by Police	28
iv)	Tear and other gas shells shot	above 70
v)	Short range shells shot.	3
vi)	Injuries caused by acid throwing.	5
vii)	Total No. of injured	Men. 690 Women 171 Children 162
viii)	Deaths	1

This gloomy day had as we understood later, many purposes to serve for the Govt. The suit against the abductor in the Court of A.D.M having been put off, the other was to influence the opinion of Shri L.P. Singh, Home

Secretary, Govt. of India, who had come for the on spot assessment of situation. The Action Committee during this period had insistently tried several times to meet Shri Singh, but all along the Action Committee was avoided on one pretext or the other. It may be observed that even on the last day of his stay in Srinagar, his P.A. categorically informed over the telephone that Mr. Singh had no time to meet the Action Committee deputation and the Action Committee's telegram for interview remained unresponded. With the above purposes a large number of members of the majority community was permitted by the Government Agency to gather at Habbakadal, a predominantly Hindu inhabited locality where the Satayagrahis batch for the day was scheduled to offer satayagraha for arrest. The D.I.G., State Home Secretary and the Deputy Commissioner of Srinagar though present on spot did not either consider the gathering of such a violent mob at this place, and in such explosive circumstances, as an offence against prohibitory orders, or were also helpless, under instructions from above, to disperse the mob. The Hindus on their side, to avoid any communal clash that would have in its turn given the handle into the hands of the Govt. to malign them, shifted the venue of Satayagraha to Kralkhud, which is another locality of Hindus above Habakadal. After the Satyagrahis had been arrested, the Hindus proceeded to Shitalnath to hold their protest meeting for the day. Meanwhile the hooligans who had gathered at Habakdal were increasing in numbers and later moved to such parts of the city where Hindus resided and pelted stones on Hindus and their houses. Even the Ganpatyar Temple was not spared. They shouted anti-national and provocative slogans. It was for the first time that slogans like "Abi Abi Khabar Ayi, Sadiq Hamara bhai" were heard.

These mobs, besides pelting stones at the houses of the Hindus and breaking windows and doors, abused and beat members of the minority community, who unfortunately came in their way. Ladies and girls were particularly insulted, molested and robbed. Be it said to their credit, that the S.P. accompanied the mob alongwith a large posse of the Kashmir Armed Police force. By the evening the meeting at Shitalnath was over and people dispersed to return to their homes, situation in the city was already tense and people were at various places abused and manhandled e.g. at Nawabazar, Khankah, Nawakadal, Nawpora, Munwarabad etc. At Nawpora a wholly muslim

area, one of the members of the community, Shri Hirday Nath Mattoo of Rainawari, an employee of the Office of the Accountant General, J & K, on his way home was mercilessly beaten by hooligans and later he fell into the hands of the Kashmir Armed Police and Govt. Paid agents who worsened his condition. Poor fellow fainted and was taken to Khanyar Police Station alongwith few others. There he regained consciousness and was subjected to vicious interrogation. At this time he was belaboured by the Station House Officer and all that he could do was to cry in the name of his mother for rescue. These cries were overheard by the other arrested persons who were in the other room and who in their turn were facing similar treatment. Ultimately, these other members were let off, but Shri Mattoo being in an extreme critical condition was removed to the Govt. Hospital where he finally succumbed to his injuries. Another scene enacted on this date should put any person to shame. In the evening a group of about 150 to 200 paid agents and hirelings, some of them naked and drunk, were escorted by the Kashmir Armed Police to a Hindu locality (Ganpatyar) where they paraded through the area. They broke into some houses, pelted stones molested girls and hurled unspeakable abuses on the people. Consternation reigned supreme at this hour. News of this hooliganism reached Shitalnath and a meeting of the members of the Action Committee was held at the hour. In this connection a delegation of injured young ladies and girls and another deputation appointed by the Action Committee later met the Governor of the State presented a Memorandum and apprised him of the unfortunate situation created by the Police and the Government.

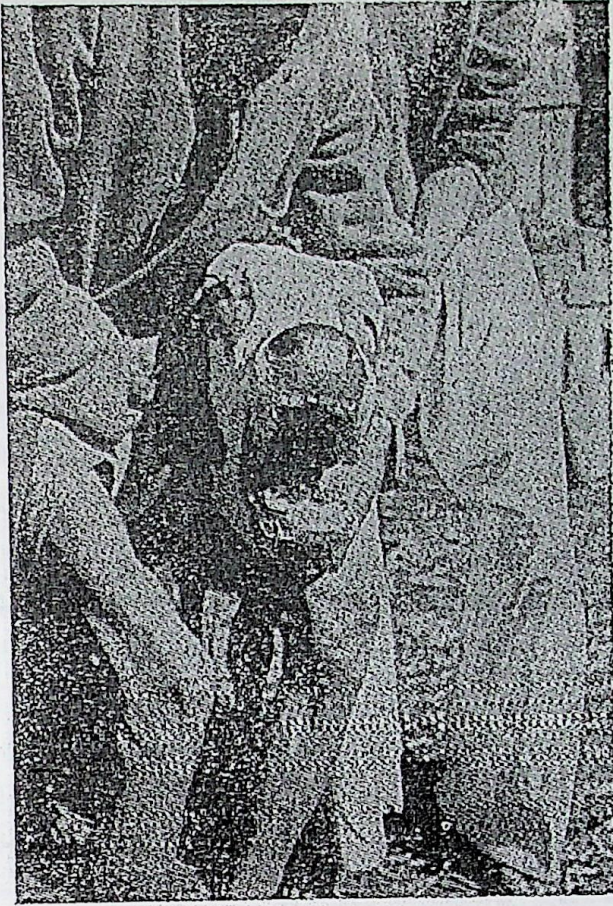
During this fortnight upto 24th, several Parliamentary delegation and individual members of various parties came to Srinagar. Deputations of the Action Committee met them and acquainted them of all anti-national and unconstitutional circumstances obtaining in Kashmir and the plight of the Minority community.

The Hindu Action Committee on its side found it very difficult to restrain young men and young women who had grown restive. A large number of letters and appeals from them were received offering to march in

a batch of 5000 strong to New Delhi to knock at the doors of the Parliament and other State Assemblies throughout India. Some offered themselves for self immolation, some suggested fast unto death at the residence of the Kashmir Chief Minister and the Prime Minister of India, and a 100 families prepared to quit Kashmir for good in the first instance. The Hindu Action Committee had to use all its tact to divert the attention of the young persons, who ultimately agreed only to start hunger strike in the premises of Shitalnath. Five Satayagrahis offered satayagraha on 24th of August.

25th. August, 1967.

Happenings on the 24th made the members of the minority community more disappointed and depressed. Indignation mounted early morning on 25th August, as the news of stone pelting, manhandling of the individuals, as well as molestation of women, beating of children, arrests without warrants during nights and sacrilege and burning of a temple near Varinagh spread like lightening. Memorable Friday of 25th August, was a day of desperate struggle of existence for Kashmiri Hindus. About fifty thousand collected at Shitalnath by 1 P.M. inspite of the fact that the area had been surrounded by the KAP blocking the main entrance to the area. The gathering was addressed by a number of speakers, who advised the people to remain non-violent and face hardships like men. At 3 P.M. as per programme and the usual practice of the past fortnight, five stayagrahis prepared to court arrest in peaceful manner. People followed them upto the point where the narrow lane from Shitalnath meets the street outside. The Kashmir Police barricaded the street on the East and the West, the North and the South holding the people at bay. Instead of arresting the non-violent Satyagrahis, the Armed Police without any warning rained lathies and tear gas shells as well as pelted stones and bricks on the sandwiched people. It was also known that the Police had got a truck load of ballast material collected on the main road side with the connivance of the hooligans living at Bhagwanpora, a nearby locality. The unarmed crowds when attacked could turn neither left nor right, nor return to Shitalnath premises till the surge of people behind had subsided. They were caught in this trap, Merciless beating, stone pelting and bursting of tear gas shells on peoples

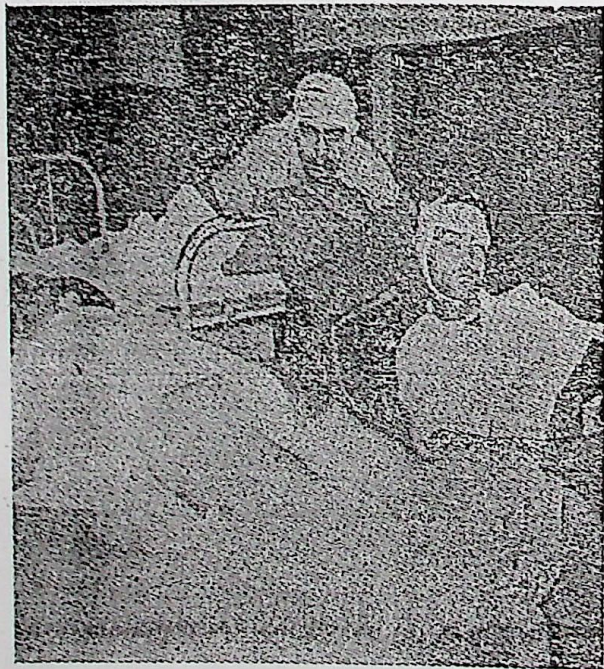
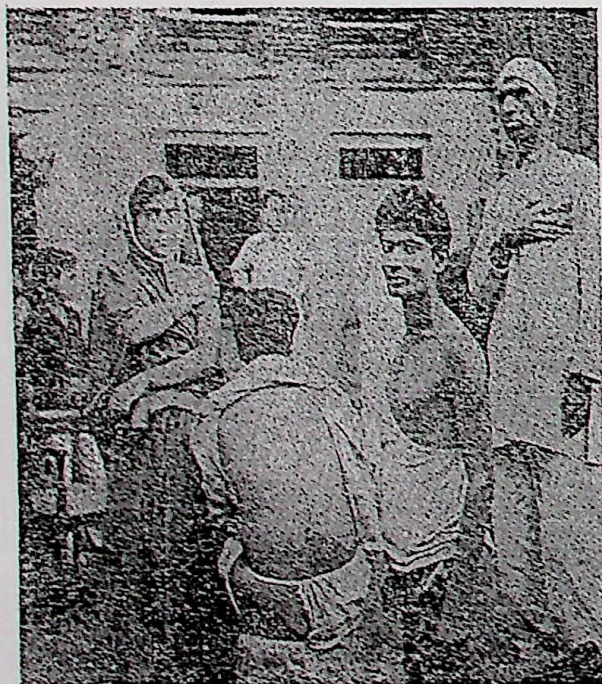


Tongue of a Cow cut
to provoke communal tension





Protest Meeting of Ladies at Shivala against
Police excesses of 27th August.



The victims of Hooliganism at Maisuma and Gaokadal
in Rattan Rani Hospital.

bodies even inside the Shitalnath Temple, premises was a pathetic scene, reminiscent of JALLIANWALA BAGH. While the main road was barricaded by the police, a temporary route was improvised over the nallah to fetch stretchers from the Rattan Rani Hospital to carry the casualties for First Aid. By the evening, the Satyagrahis appeared at specified spot, on the road side and offered themselves for arrest. Hartal had been complete in Hindu localities in Srinagar and demonstration had also been held at Jammu, at Delhi and at Amritsar etc. Hindu Govt. Servants had not in general been able to move to their offices, especially in view of the fact that Hindu localities had become insecure. While police atrocities were at the pitch and unabated, it was felt that the Head of the State may again be approached with a written memorandum, but to our dismay the delegation found that the Governor had not considered it necessary to use his independent agency to assess the situation and had remained content with only the politicians' briefing.

26th. August, 1967.

The night between the 25th and the 26th was perhaps the darkest night of the period. Arrests of people during the night were extraordinarily indiscriminate. On the 26th lathicharges and pelting of stones by members of the Kashmir Police in plain clothes in Hindu localities and Ganpatyar were so harassing that members of the minority community felt that the Govt. was out to exterminate them. Hooligans of the majority community had been inspired to molest whoever came in their way even if they were ladies. Stray assaults became so common that the Govt. at this stage felt it necessary to clamp curfew in the afternoon. The curfew in effect was a cobra clasp for the minority community, as only the Hindu areas of the city were subjected to curfew leaving other areas free. The members of the majority community had a free hand to harass the members of the minority community. Naturally hartal was spontaneous and the people had also to remain away from their work.

A visit on this day to the Rattan Rani Hospital was so saddening. The wards, passages and the Varandahs in both the storeys and lawns were over

crowded with injured people-young and old, men and women, boys and girls. Tents had to be pitched to accommodate the injured. Head injuries were mostly common and there was a look of grief all round. Broken hands and broken legs among the injured patients were considered a lucky escape by the victims. Some were found with broken ribs.

Inspite of the terrible curfew a batch of five Satyagrahis offered themselves for arrest on the day. Outside Kashmir, eleven volunteers blessed by the Jagat Guru Shankar Acharya began a token Dharna in front of the the Union Home Minister's residence.

27th. August, 1967

Curfew continued to be clamped partially in Srinagar city only in such areas which are mainly inhabited by Hindus. This was frightening as in curfew free areas members of the minority community were harrassed and the outskirts of the curfew bound areas were open to hooligans to give vent to their venom. To further aggravate this miserable plight, pro-Pakistani elements of the majority community, inspired by the high ups in the Government spread false rumours about looting of Muslim houses by Hindus and burning of mosques. The false rumours spread like wild fire and as a consequence miscreants redoubled their anti Hindu activities. The Hindu houses throughout the night were pelted with stones making life impossible. All the day the Police were absent or if present looked on indifferent. Security Police other than Kashmir Armed Police was not anywhere to be seen. More saddening was that the police seized the jeep in which food was carried for the patients etc. and arrested the persons who escorted it, though they had curfew passes. It was with great difficulty that the Jeep was released late in the day at the instance of the Home Secretary. Several utensils, thalis, digchas etc. were taken by Police which have not been returned so far, inspite of repeated requests. The result was that the injured had to go without the morning meals on that day in the Hospital.

By 27th August two victims of previous lathi-chages Shri Maharaj Krishen Razdan a teenaged student whose poor father was on duty at Canada, and

Shri Lassa Kaul Badam died, bringing the number of deaths to three till then. Goyt. permission for taking out their funeral procession was obtained and a Police escort headed by the A. D. M., D. I. G. and the S.P. accompanied it. This mourning procession of men and women reciting "OM NAMA SHIVAI" was greeted at Karanagar chowk with stone pelting from different sides, in front from Shahidganj, and in the rear from Chota Bazar and from Baramaloo route. A contingent of the KAP and Home Guards in plain clothes not only abetted and encouraged them, but also actively participated in stone throwing. The Police men were heard shouting aloud to their co-religionist "Oh Musalmanoo why do you tarry, we are fighting infidels". By the time a part of 'Arthi' eventually reached the cremation ground, the city was seized with terror as flames rose sky high in Karannagar and at three spots where houses had been set on fire. Houses were broken into and looted. One person Shri P. N. Bhan was robbed and fatally wounded near the house of D. I. G. Police Kashmir, wherefrom he was removed to State Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries later. Curfew was extended to the whole city and the Army was called in though late to assist the Police.

A batch of five satayagrahis had courted arrest earlier on this day also. By the evening of 26th August, 1967, casualties etc. were:-

1. Satayagrahis arrested ending 26th Aug.	
in batches of 5 per day.	80
2. Others arrested.	387
3. No. of lathi charges by police	35
4. Tear gas and other shells shot	115
5. Short range shells shot	3
6. Injuries caused by acid throwing.	5
7. Total no. of injuries upto 7 P.M.	
on 26.8.67	
a) men	1117
b) Women	292
c) Children	353
8. Deaths	3

28th August, 1967-JANAM ASHTAMI

Curfew continued unabated and on this Sacred Birthday of Lord Krishna the Government did not feel moved to relax curfew for even an hour. Though on the 27th there was relaxation for two hours and on 29th there was relaxation likewise for two hours. As to why on this day of fast for the Hindus the Government did not relax the curfew is difficult to understand. Even in the war torn Vietnam, Lord Bhudha's Birthday and X-Mas days are declared days of ceasefire.

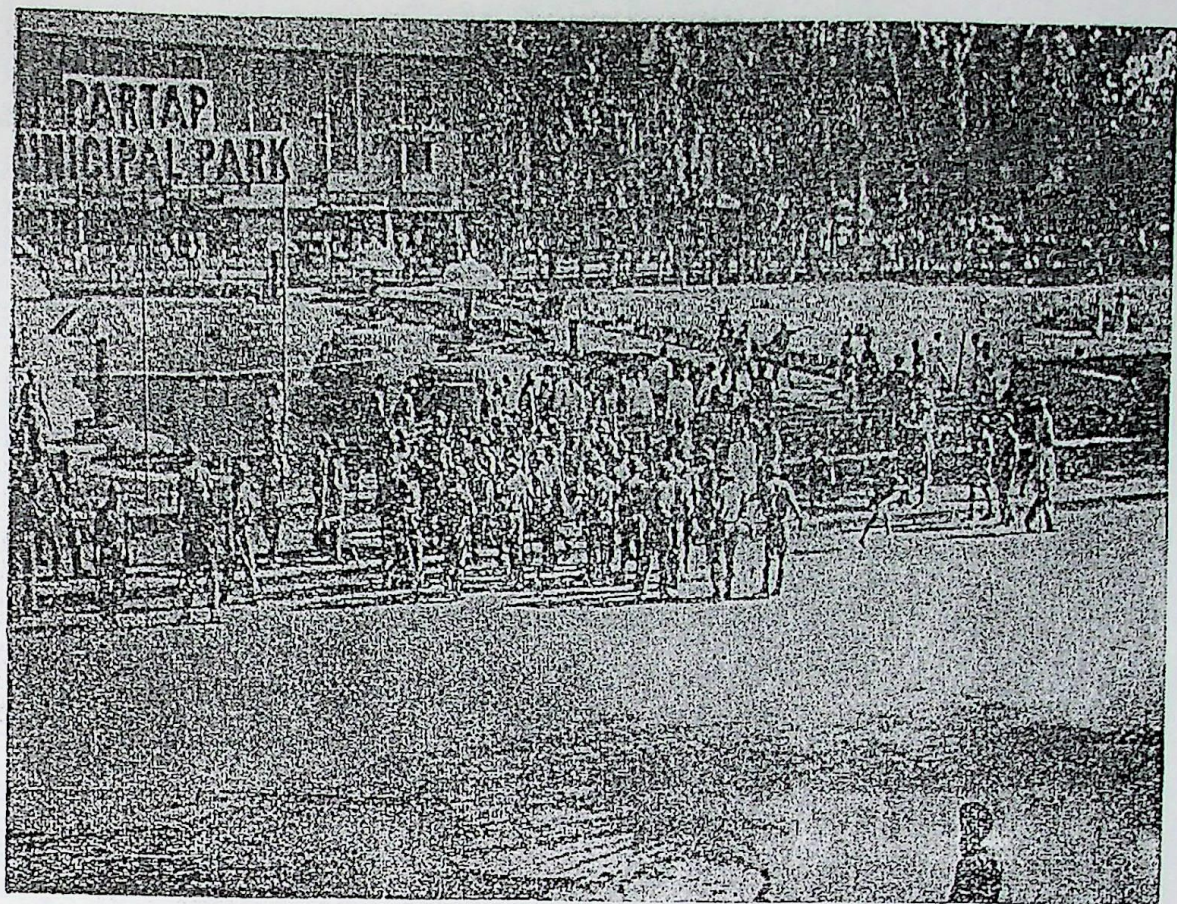
With curfew continuing in Hindu area, and predominantly Muslim area comparatively immune from it, the result was that members of the minority community were assaulted, abused and looted by the hooligans from the majority community with the connivance of the K.A.P.

A batch of five satayagrahis however courted arrest undaunted by curfew.

29th to 31st August

Curfew continued to be imposed and during relaxation period of two hours two batches of 5 satayagrahis courted arrest on the 29th. Kashmir Armed Police raided Hindu houses in the city, arrested innocent people without warrants, and even made good with whatever they could lay their hands on. Peaceful satayagraha continued on 30th and 31st and there were gatherings at Shitalnath during curfew breaks.

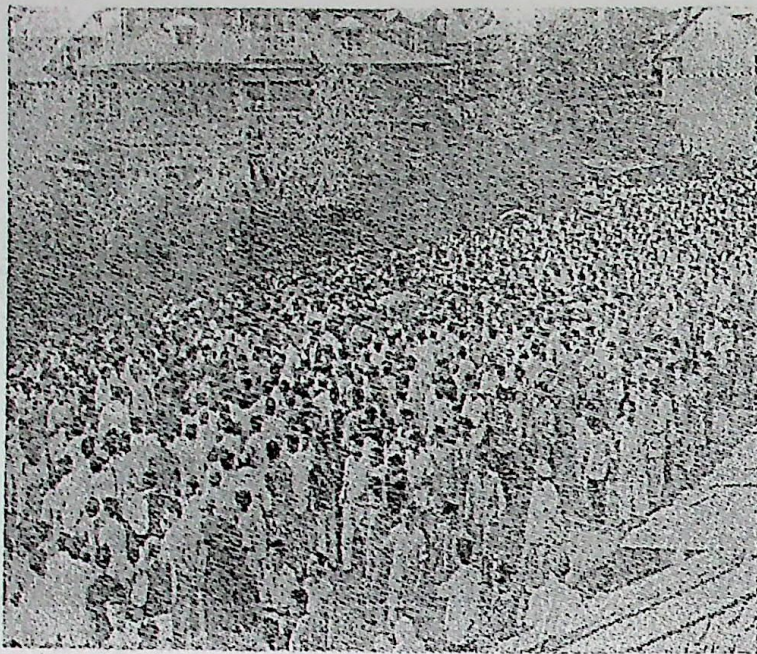
At this stage Shri I.K. Gujral, Union Minister paid a visit to Srinagar, but his assessment of the situation was largely confined to his talks with Ministers and the Government party and henchmen. He had of course gone round some parts of the City, but he was accompanied by Govt. Agents and Mr. Tariq. A deputation of Hindu Action Committee met him later and gave him a correct appraisal of the situation.



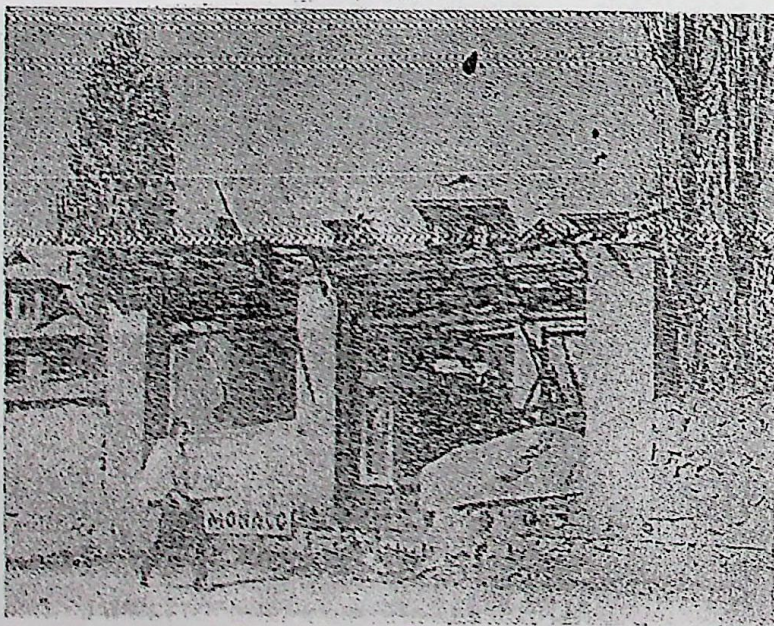
Police harrassing and arresting way farers



An old lady shot at leg on August 15th.



Joint Funeral Procession of Two "Shaheeds" on 27th August
Later stoned by hooligans near Cremation Ground.



Shops gutted at Karan Nagar Chowk on 27th August.

1st & 2nd Sept. 1967

A stage had been reached by now when the Central Government could not sit silent and the Union Home Minister had to come over to Srinagar. The number of deaths, caused by police lathicharges and murderous assaults of the hooligans stood at four by this date and the fifth victim of both the murderous assault of the hooligans and the police torture Shri Hirday Nath Matoo. referred to above, was nearing his death, which ultimately took place on 3rd Sept. 1967 after Shri Chavan left.

Shri Y. B. Chavan's visit to Srinagar and its aftermath

The State Government enmeshed in its own game continued its efforts to dupe the Central Government. Anti-Indian elements continued to fish in these troubled waters, and the bait was provided by the State Government. Mr. Sadiq Chief Minister made another statement in the State Assembly on 31st August which betrayed lack of appreciation of the situation, though at the same time he could not hide that his Government had been criticised by the majority Community and charged with following a soft line. He confirmed that on 24th August, a section of Muslims organised procession & demonstrations in protest.

Mr. Sadiq's statement was full of platitudes and at the same time threatened that no quarter would be shown to the elements (impliedly the Kashmir Pandits) seeking to create an atmosphere of tension. As to the abducted girl, all that he had to say was that the case was already before the Court of law and that it was his duty to allow the law to take its own course in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility. It is three months since he made the statement and the court has yet to settle the preliminaries regarding the bereaved mother's complaint — whether she should be heard in the presence of the abductor or not. This dilatory process indicates the intention behind this abduction case.

Political tussle within the ruling party and certain elements of the so called Congress party continued. The rule of law became a casualty. In such a situation the Union Home Minister, Shri Y. B. Chavan, arrived in Srinagar on 2nd Sept. 1967. The Kashmir Hindu Action Committee expected that his visit would give the central leadership and the Government an understanding of the implications of the unfortunate and tragic Parmeshwari episode in Srinagar. A memorandum was submitted to him by the Committee on the day of his arrival. The events leading to the seduction of the girl and the mishandling of the case coupled with the neglect of the Government were brought to his notice, indicating the immediate demands for an honourable settlement, viz

1. The abducted girl to be restored to her widowed mother.
2. Judicial probe to be ordered into the conduct of the investigating agency connected with the abduction case and into the police excesses all through and also the suspension of the concerned officers before the probe starts.

3. Unconditional release of all detenues connected with this Agitation and withdrawal of any contemplated or already taken action against Government servants.
4. Compensation to the families of the deceased and injured and families affected by loot and arson.
5. Restoration of Law and order to ensure security of minorities.
6. Enquiry into the grievances of the minority by a High Power Tribunal headed by a High Court Judge.

There were discussions throughout the day and late in the night on 2nd Sept. Later, a deputation of the Hindu Action Committee had a second round of talks with Shri Chavan. This was all overboard, but behind the scenes the members of the 'Control Room' of the Government presented in the garb of 'Peace Loving Citizens' another memorandum, dated 2nd Sept. 1967, to Shri Chavan whom greetings were offered for his "stirring revelations and disclosures he was alleged to have made only *two days ago* at New Delhi about the tragic and deplorable incidents of Ranchi." The memorandum as presented to Shri Chavan, was compiled and got printed within these two days, incorporating percentages of different communities in services and admissions especially to the Regional Engineering College, Srinagar. There is no wonder that the "Peace Loving Citizens" could in no time get these figures from the Government records, as the Government agency itself was behind all this. Ironically, the unfortunate seduction of the minor Hindu orphan girl was mentioned as ,

“HE conversion to Islam and the marriage of a Kashmiri Pandit girl with a Muslim is a very trivial matter in our normal life and could not and should not have caused a sizeable conflagration”.

Unwittingly, these self righteous "Peace Loving Citizens" made mention of every thing atrocious that the majority community had been engaged in. In their eagerness to influence the opinion of Shri Y. B. Chavan, they went to the extent of relating in their Memorandum that :

ii--“HE actual truth is that they (Kashmir Pandits) have spared no efforts to wipe out the Muslim population by resorting to violence. It is unfortunate that the State Government have also suppressed many of the

glaring activities of incendiarism, in which the Kashmiri Pandits community has engaged itself during the last two or three weeks or so. Huge stocks of arms and ammunition have been recovered from temples, houses and a large truck loads of armaments have been seized, but neither the Kashmir Radio nor the Information department have had to say a word about the disclosures, although there is hardly any person in the State who is not in the know of the matter."

As to how the truck loads of arms and ammunition were disposed of by the State Government has yet to be brought to light by the 'Peace Loving Citizens.'

On the same date i.e. 2nd Sept. 1967, a printed appeal from Khawaja Ali Shah, Chairman, Idara Auqafe-Islamia, Jammu & Kashmir and ex-President Plebiscite Front, also an Ex-Minister of Revenue of Sheikh Abdullah's time, issued to the address of Prime Minister where in seduction case is stated as :

ecently an event has taken place which from whatever point of view it is looked upon was of common occurrence, but has been exploited in a way which has shaken to its foundation the peace in the country and the confidence of the majority community very deeply and rudely. A Kashmir Pandit girl has married a Muslim after having fulfilled legal formalities. There have been well known inter-communal marriage cases in Kashmir which absolutely caused no tension or excitement. Why the present case was treated as an exception passes our comprehension particularly when it was sub-judice and when judicial findings would have revealed the true position. It appears that the hoo—how in this particular case must have been determined by some ulterior motive which was used as a camouflage."

While making similar flagrant statements in the appeal, Khawaja Ali Shah made a point for the release of Sheikh Abdullah.

The above extracts from the Memorandum of the 'Peace Loving citizens' and from the appeal of Khawaja Ali Shah would indicate the mentality of the majority community in relation to the minority. Seduction does not get spiritualised by owning it as conversion, but to a Muslim in such a situation, all sense of proportion is lost. If Jews (Israel) go to war with Muslims (Arabians), the Kashmir Muslim will without any compunction burn the Christian Churches in Srinagar, as in 1967, For political purposes even their own holy Relic at Hazrat Bal was

stolen in 1963. The Muslims know that it was not a non-Muslim, who did it. If people go to this extent, what hope is there for a minority to expect justice at the hands of a Government backed by people of the ignominious "Control Room."

The Statement Government in the Department of Information issued on 3rd September, 1967, the following joint communique :

“ON the termination of the visit of the Union Home Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Y. B. Chavan to Srinagar, the following agreed statement was issued :

“THE representative of the Hindu Action Committee called on the Union Home Minister in Srinagar on Sept. 2 and 3 1967, and placed before him various matters relating to the movement which they had launched recently. The Union Home Minister appealed to them that an endeavour should be made to create an atmosphere of peace and order for a cool and dispassionate understanding and examination of all the issues. For this purpose, he earnestly advised them to withdraw the agitation.

“IT may be recalled that the present agitation began on a complaint about the alleged abduction of a minor girl, Kumari Parmeshwari Handoo. The Union Home Minister advised the Action Committee that as this question was now the subject matter of an inquiry before a Court of law everyone would do well to allow due processes of law to take their normal course.

“ALLEGATIONS have been made about the excesses committed by the Police in dealing with the agitation, and it was desired that the Union Home Minister should choose the manner and method in which such allegations are properly examined. The State Government have already reiterated that in a democracy it is the right of every citizen to ventilate grievances, and it is always the obligation of the Government to ensure redressal wherever indicated. In fact the Chief Minister has held out this assurance more than once in his statements both in and outside the State Legislature.

“THE Action Committee also expressed their concern about the various disabilities and difficulties which their community had been facing in matters of economic development, employment and education opportunities. The

Chief Minister had already announced his decision to constitute a committee which would examine all these and related matters. Soon after a Memorandum on this subject is made available to the Chief Minister by the Action Committee, the State Government would set up such a committee as would command universal confidence.

“**T**HE Action Committee has agreed, in response to the appeal made by the Union Home Minister, to suspend their agitation, with a view to creating an atmosphere of peace and tranquility, the Chief Minister has indicated that the State Government would make the consequential responsive gesture of releasing all the persons arrested and detained in connection with the agitation, as also order the withdrawal of any punitive action which may have been taken or was in the process of being taken in regard to persons connected with this movement.

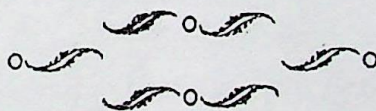
“**T**HE Union Home Minister and the Chief Minister wish to take this opportunity of appealing to the people of Jammu & Kashmir State to preserve harmony and peace amongst various communities, a tradition which has been our proudest and most valued possession. They would like to reiterate the desire of the Government of India and that of the State Government to ensure that all sections and classes of people equally enjoy the rights and privileges enshrined in our democratic constitution.

“**I**N this context, it is our sacred duty to assure the minority communities in our country to full security and a sense of equal participation in the life of the nation.”

The Union Home Minister held a Press Conference in Srinagar and immediately after met a delegation of the United Muslim Front and had discussions with them. As to what this United Muslim Front was is already discussed in the previous pages. This was the “Control Room” in a new posture.

According to the discussions and the statement of the Union Home Minister and the State Chief Minister, Union Home Minister was to come to Srinagar again on or about 13th Sept., i.e. 10 days after his departure on 3rd Sept. During this period the abducted girl was to be separated from the abductor, kept in the custody of her natural guardian, the mother or a third party and the court would take its own course for deciding the issue. This was

not to happen as the members of the 'Control Room' started working up the majority community to defeat the very agreement arrived at by the Central Government and the State Government with the Hindu Action Committee. Shri Chavan did not come to Srinagar again and took cover behind the Chinese faracas at Nathula. What happened after this is discussed in the chapters that follow.



BEHIND SHRI CHAVAN'S BACK

At the Srinagar Air-port just before taking off for Delhi, Shri Chavan said that the Action Committee has decided to suspend the agitation and that a statement to the effect would be issued in the course of the day. The Joint Communique as reproduced in the last chapter was issued both by the State Government and the Hindu Action Committee. Shri Chavan said he was returning "fully satisfied" and he expressed the hope that the agreement would be "followed up in the right spirit." On reaching Delhi in a triumphant mood he gave a detailed report to his Cabinet colleagues the very afternoon.

It was thought the Government was actually interested now in fair play. On the following day the Hindu Action Committee publicly requested persons, affected in a mammoth gathering to send full particulars of the police excesses, pelting incidents, loot, arson, incendiarism & loss of personal belongings, beatings & every other injury and injustice suffered by them or by their friends, relatives, acquaintances etc. to the Action Committee. The date, the time, the place, the name(s) of the person(s) involved were required to be given to ensure the maximum accuracy.

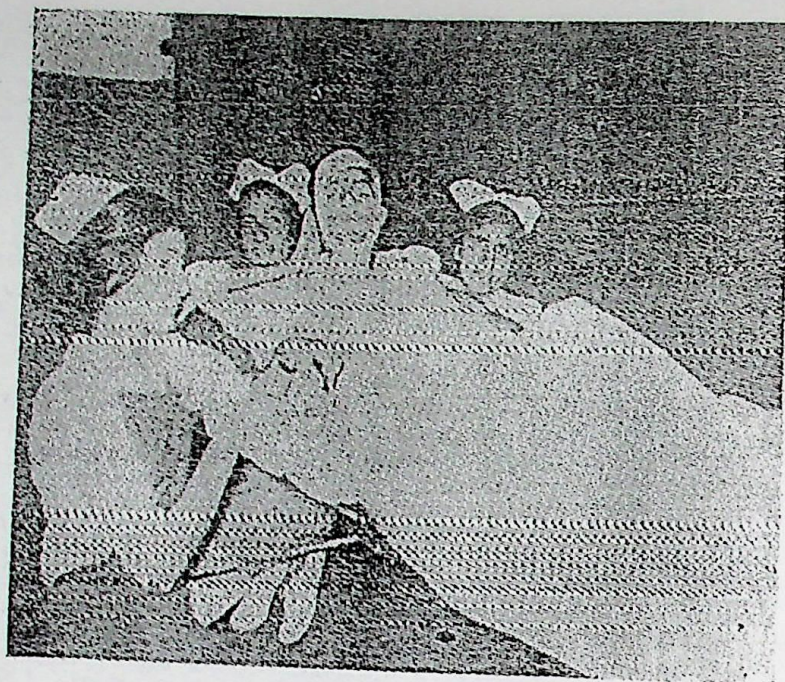
Soon after, the Action Committee considering that the crisis was over asked the people to address themselves to social reforms which did not in any way concern the Government or any of its members. The members of the "Control Room" working behind the scenes willed otherwise and pressurised Kh. Sadiq's Government to desist from implementing the agreement arrived at between the Hindu Action Committee on one side and the Union Home Minister and the State Chief Minister on the other. A tussle started and there was a suspense, all sorts of whispering rumours were circulated. Neither any action was taken to separate the abducted girl from the abductor till the legal process took its course, nor was the salary of the employees of the Government for the two days of leave released as agreed to, nor were the suspended Officers easily permitted to rejoin the duty. Instead show-cause notices were served on many an employee, suspensions ordered and transfers effected especially amongst lady employees resulting in great harrassment. Men at the top spoke with two



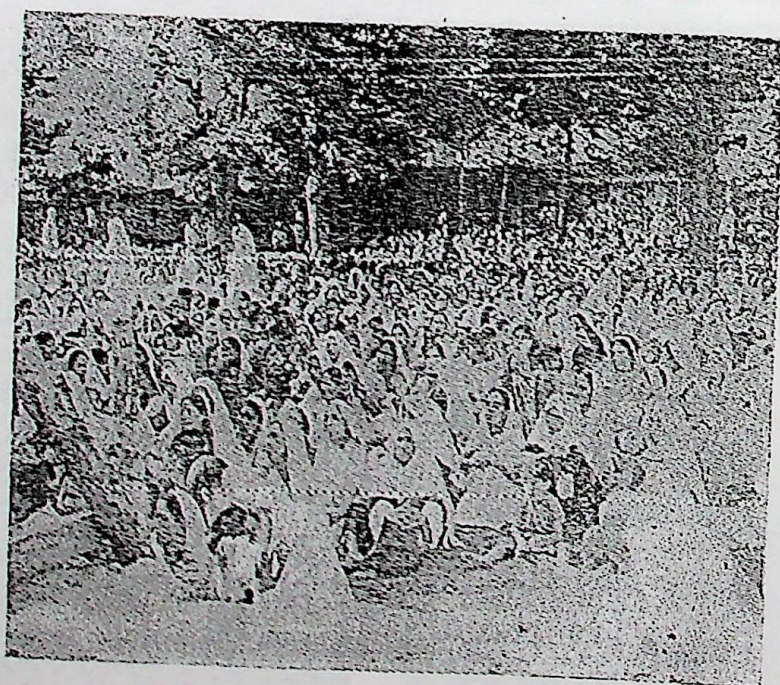
Victims of Lathi charges in Rattan Rani Hospital
Brutally hit at heads.



Lady victims struggling between life & death



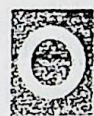
Mercilessly beaten at Shitalnath on 25th August



Ladies in mourning at Shivala.

voices; while publicly they talked of communal harmony and constituted Peace Committees, secretly they started working up communal feelings in the Majority Community. While releasing the arrested persons, a section of them was retained for which a Minister of the Government had afterwards to intervene. At the same time the tussle within the Pradesh Congress Committee over the agreement with the Action Committee went to such an extent that the General Secretary offered to resign. There was talk of the Cabinet reshuffle too.

News-papers of the Majority Community started issuing statements, repeating exactly what the so-called "Peace Loving Citizens" and the "Idara Auqaf-i-Islamia" had stated in their Memorandum and the Appeal submitted respectively on 2nd September 1967 to Shri Chavan. Statements of political nature were alleged to have been issued by the abducted girl. The "Roshni", a weekly paper in its 7th September issue, wrote that Parveen Akhtar (Parmashwari Handoo's alleged Muslim name) had sent a statement to it for publication which concisely reads :-



ON my conversion to Islam, if Islam and Muslims have had no benefit, at least I have become extremely happy in entering this fold. All Muslims should realise that the events that took place in Kashmir after my conversion were only to put Muslims to sword. The agitation was only an excuse to finish up with the Muslims and was a conspiracy. Communal bodies, like the Jansangh and its leader, like Madhok and other communal leaders had a very disgraceful hand in it. The Govt. of India should protect the Majority community here, etc. etc."

What a Mockery :-

Similar statements were issued from other quarters also. The Muslim students of the Youth League Anantnag, issued misleading statement after meeting Mirza Mohd. Afzal Beg for three hours. At the same time similar statements issued alleging that the majority community had been assaulted and injured in Hindu localities. Posters were found every-where setting a time limit for the minority community to vacate or else face annihilation. It was also alleged that some driver was stabbed. Allegations were made against the Central Reserve Police and other similar establishments.

During this period the Court case against the abductor was taken up for hearing on 6th September at the Cantonment Board. The A.D.M. in his decision stated that he had no doubt to accept that as far as the abduction case under 366 RPC was concerned, the abductor and his Advocate had no locus-standi, but as far as the tracing of the abducted girl under section 552-RPC was considered, the A.D.M. was not prepared to withdraw the notice that had been issued to the abductor. Thus in a round-about way he let the abductor have the benefit of intervening in the court proceedings against the procedure. The widowed mother soon after went in appeal against this order to the District and Sessions Court and the date was fixed for 12th September 1967. In this Court as well the suit has met similar fate after over many prolonged and dilatory processes and is now to go up to the High Court for this preliminary point. The abducted girl is still with the abductor and the A.D.M. has yet to issue process on the original case under section 366 R.P.C.

Concurrently, hooligans in the Majority Community started creating trouble for the members of the minority Community. Hindu houses were stoned during the nights in different mohallas e. g. Rainawari, Alikadal, Safakadal, Fateh Kadal, Karan Nagar, Bohri Kadal etc. People had to keep awake for fear of their houses being set on fire. It was through the vigilance of a woman that the house of one Jia Lal near Narainjoo temple at Ali Kadal could be saved from being put on fire in a locality which would have engulfed more than a hundred houses of Hindus. Atrocities, even on dumb animals were perpetrated to injure the feelings of Hindus. The cow of one Shri Dina Nath, of Sathoo Barbarshah who with others used to be left for grazing in the S. P. College premises for the nights, returned home one morning with a bleeding mouth and on inspection it was found that her tongue had been cut. The medical report says :—

“he anterior portion of the tongue about 4 inches from the apex linguae completely cut and the cut piece missing. Profuse salivation with blood tinge from the mouth present.
From the above observation I am of the opinion that the tongue has been cut by some sharp weapon.”

In this interval Dr. Karan Singh, who had heard about the incidents in Kashmir during his foreign tour came to Srinagar on 7th September, 1967 on a two-day visit. He took stock of the conditions prevailing here and later in his Radio broadcast assured that the minorities would be protected at any cost. Hindu Action Committee finding that the Government was backing out of its agreement and that purpose creating a tense situation, a delegation left for New Delhi to apprise the Central Government and other leaders of the actual situation. The Chief Minister taking his hint from it, followed them soon to Delhi and spoke in his own way and duped the Central Government again. He avoided to face the press at Delhi for obvious reasons. Later, on his return to Srinagar he addressed the newly formed Citizens Amity Council on 19th September, 1967 and told the members that their first duty was to persuade those Hindus who had left their homes in Muslim areas to return to their homes. The State Congress Chief, Syed Mir Qasim, also addressed the Council in a similar strain and denied his complicity in fomenting communal trouble. A spokesman of the Government also referred to the allegation made that an amount of Rs. 1.33 lacs had been drawn from the Treasury and distributed among anti-social elements in organising the riots.

Conditions in Srinagar continued to deteriorate. The conspiracy of the leaders of the Pradesh Congress Committee had by now got exposed and the conditions had reached to such an extent that some members were reported to be preparing a Memorandum against the Congress Chief for being presented to Shri Kamraj, the Congress President in this connection. As to what happened to this Memorandum behind the scenes afterwards did not come to light. It was, however, understood that the Congress High Command warned the Pradesh Congress Committee to purge the congress organisation of all individuals who spread communal virus. These very communal elements however appeared in a different garb as members of the "Peace Committee" formed to bring about communal harmony in the valley. A few Hindus had also been included in the Peace Committee but one of them, who pointed out in one of the meetings the glaring communal tendencies was arrested to silence him.

Law and order situation in the city deteriorated fast. It became extremely difficult for women of the minority community and school and college going

girls to pass safely through the streets. These ugly situations having come to public notice made the "Control Room" uneasy and a new plot was hatched. The Principal, Miss Mahmooda Ahmed, of the Government Women's College, had a signature campaign started on 19th September, 1967 in the College by pressurising the students to sign a declaration to the effect that all girl students were safe both inside and outside the College premises. The reputation of Sadiq Government became so low that it now needed the certificates of good behaviour even from the minor girls of the P.U.C. classes.

It is reported that the students' Union Resolution passed in the College on 19th September was to the effect that the girls were all safe within the college premises. The text of the resolution was changed to "both inside and outside the college" and it was passed on to be signed by the girls. A few girls of the 1st year signed it and some-how a student discovered the text. The other girls refused to oblige them and they were harassed. The result was that Hindu girls of the College came to Shitalnath and reported the incident to the Action Committee who in turn informed the Police and the Home Secretary. A Magistrate and a Police Officer came to Shitalnath to investigate the matter. Later no action was taken about the matter. The Youths, already agitated over the State Government backing out of the agreement with the Hindu Action Committee got excited. In protest some Hindu students started Dharna outside the Women's College, next morning. Again, the mis-handling of the situation by the Government agency led to ugly developments that evening. It is strange that on 24th August, 1967 when naked drivers acted obscenely no action was taken against them. Contrary to this the same authorities lost their brains only at the sight of 50 boys to the extent that three Ministers were present on the scene in no time. A section of Muslim boys encouraged by a few Muslim Professors of the S. P. College created a scene for a clash with these Hindu boys just close to the Police Station. They were joined by other Muslim students from the Medical and Amar Singh College and they attacked the Hindu boys on "Dharma" in presence of Law and Order authorities on spot. They chased the Hindu boys and started stoning them and any vehicle that came their way. Hooliganism continued under the directions of the "Control Room". On the return from Delhi of Kh. Sadiq, a deputation of the Hindu Action Commi-

tee met him in pursuance of his advice in Delhi on 1st October in connection with the implementation of the agreement and restoration of "Parmeshari" who (C.M.) desired the deputation to meet him again on 3rd October. But on 3rd October, 1967 the machination of the very people behind the scenes expressed itself in a rumour that a few leaves of the holy Quran had been found in a latrine. This pre-planned rumour took little time to spread and muslim students both boys & girls of the S. P. College, A. S. College and other institution collected at the Lal Chowk and near about places. As day advanced their violence grew to an extent that there was a clash between the students and the Police. A convoy of Army vehicles that passed by was badly pelted with stones and their wind screens broken. The police on duty were stoned & attacked and they in defence had to resort to firing. There were two deaths. When the news went round there was hartal throughout the city and extreme tension developed.

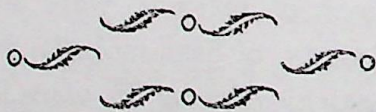
The result was again a misfortune for the members of minority community who were subjected to assault at many cross corners. In many cases their personal effects like cycles, wathes, pens etc. were taken away. Dozens of Hindus were injured and condition of many of them was serious. Girls returning home from the College were molested and their garments were torn. The military and civil vehicles, the Government hotels and other places were stoned. This was a strange commentary on the loud assertions of the Government agency about law & order situation prevailing in the city. Irony of the situation was that curfew was again imposed on the areas inhabited by the Hindu community.

On 4th October processions of Muslims were allowed to move from Kahankah side into the Hindu locality of Bana mohalla, Habbakadal area under curfew as the members of the majority community were left at large to move as they pleased. They carried a Coffin, which when seized by Police was found empty, filled only with a little grass. The processionists then took to their heels and on return they pelted stones on Hindus and their houses and Hindu areas of Bana mohalla, Maharaj Gunj, Syed Ali Akbar etc. became scenes of loot and arson. In Bana - mohalla Hindu houses and shops

were looted and property worth thousands was taken away. The same time a ghastly scene was enacted. One Autar Krishan Khushu was stabbed to death near Khankah-Fatehkadal by the fleeing mob and after stabbing, he was thrown into the river. His body was got out from the river by the Police and taken to the Hospital. Besides this, there were six more cases of stabbing on this day.

On the following day, several houses were pelted in Wazapora and a few shops looted at Shamaswari, Mahraj Gunj, Zaina Kadal, Syed Ali Akbar etc. in Srinagar. Traffic from one locality to another became difficult for the minority community. Colleges and Schools closed again, and the closure was announced by the Government day to day till this extended to about a fortnight.

The circumstances thus created made it difficult for the Action Committee to pursue the question of implementation of the agreement and the Government remained silent. It will be seen that whenever there arose any occasion for consideration of the issues involved the agencies behind the scene manoeuvred to tarpedo the same.



Communalists-cum-Communists activities.

The law and order situation in Srinagar and some areas of the Valley continued deteriorating while the spokesmen of the Government continued to harp on their theme that allegations regarding the situation in Srinagar having worsened after the Hindu agitation was suspended, were completely untrue. In support of their statements to the effect that the situation in Srinagar was perfectly normal, they announced that the Schools and Colleges were functioning with full attendance and that there had been no attempt at molestation or arson any where. To substantiate their statement further they mentioned that hundreds of tourists were pouring into Srinagar and to the Kashmir Valley every day.

The actual situation, however, was that communal tension had also been worked up at Sopore, Baramulla, Anantnagh, Iral, Kulgam etc. -places at a radius of 30 miles and more from Srinagar. Even the State Transport Undertaknig in glaring connivance with the Private Transporters had failed to maintain the traffic on the roads either in the city or outside. In Srinagar pelting of stones on Hindu house continued unabated at nights and during the day assaults at Hindu passers-by were a common occurance in predominantly Muslim areas. The police Personnel, if present, simply acted as spectators. Anti-National elements were vociferous with anti-indian slogans. The slogans of the two sections Hindu & Muslims - of the students had a polarisation. "Bharat Mata ki jai", "Hindu Muslim Unity Zindabad" were the slogans of August, 1967 Hindu Satayagraha, while "Pakistan Zindabad", Ayub Khan Zindabad", "Hindu Muslim Unity Murdabad" were the slogans of the so-called Mujahids of the "Black week of October". The Pakistani agents cried aloud "Indian dogs go back".

Even the impetus behind the two commotions the Kashmiri Hindu Satayagraha of August and the 'Control Room' sponsored Muslim agitation of September and October have been diametrically opposite. In one case it was centripetal and in the other centrifugal. In the case of Hindu Satayagraha, a minor orphan girl, the only bread winner of a Hindu Widow, was abducted by her Muslim co-employee, abetted and assisted in the initial stages by the Muslim Manager of the Co-operative Bazar, and later by State Police, and this touched

off the Hindu Satyagraha at a stage when the Government failed to do its duty. In the other case the agitation was inspired from within by the unscrupulous elements of the 'Control Room' that exploited the religious sentiments of the unsophisticated Muslim masses. In September a mosque burnt at Baramulla and it was expeditiously announced over the Srinagar Radio, unlike the burning of the temple at Chinigund (Verinag) in August and the temple and the Dharamshalla in Kulgam in October. A Muslim young men's mob paraded Nai Sarak a Hindu locality in Srinagar, shouting that 'Masjid-i-Shariff' will be avenged. The Government investigated this incident and found out the mischief behind this. As already stated before in the first week of October a coffin was carried by a big procession, allegedly containing a corpse of a Muslim murdered by Hindus. When the coffin was intercepted by Police at Habakadal, it was found, to the surprise of all, to contain a broom under a covering of hay. At this confrontation the processionists lost face and set to looting and burning whatever they could lay their hands on in the Hindu locality, as they had got frustrated.

The Government on its side, to maintain the farce of its public statements about the normalcy of law and order situation in Srinagar and in the Valley allowed Inter-University matches to be played at Srinagar Stadium. Turning of the tide against the J & K University in the Foot-ball match with Punjab University touched off a row. Hooligans of the majority community tried to create disorder. They pelted stones and stabbed a constable there. This resulted in police firing and in the death of a person. The Incident added fuel to the Smouldering Communal hatred, As to why the Kashmiri Pandits should have been the target of revenge for this unfortunate event as well, is the mirror of our destiny as a minority in the Kashmir Valley.

By this date communal frenzy had taken hold of more hooligans of the majority community to such an extent that they did not hesitate to ransack and loot visitors, buses on Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, at Rampore, Bijbehara and Sangam. The tourists were man-handled and injured, after their buses had been held up and pelted with stone. Even the women passengers were not spared. The luggage of some tourists was looted and they could save their lives with great difficulty. On reaching



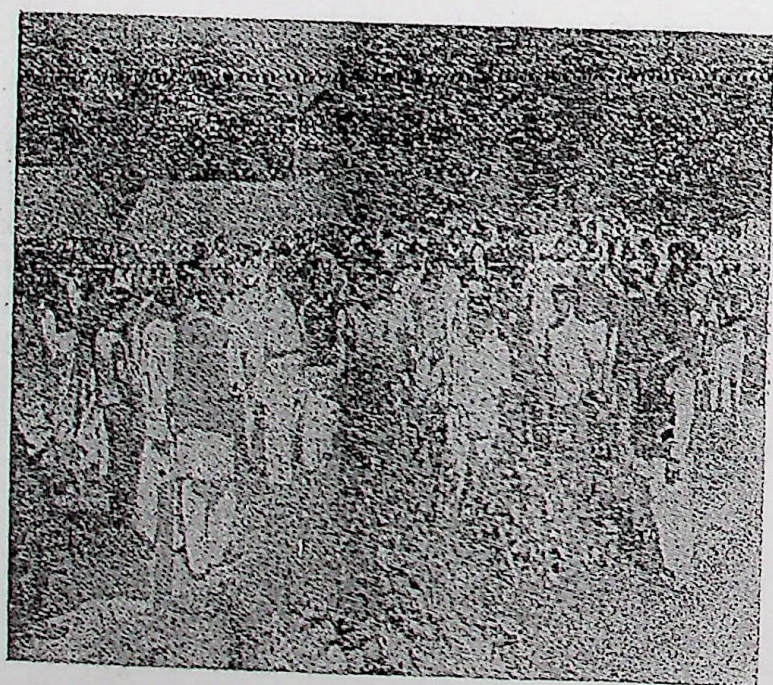
The victims of Lathi charges
with serious Head
injuries—



at Rattan Rani Hospital.



Police excesses at Pratap Park



Tents pitched to accomodate
the Injured at Rattan Rani Hospital.

Jammu the tourists wished to express their grief to the public, but the Police did not allow it. Some people took photographs but the Police seized these.

The happenings slowly affected the Muffasils wherefrom horrifying tales came to the City. At Safapora, a place on the Srinagar Bandipore road, the houses of Mohan lal and Nand lal Bhan were pelted with stones. A School teacher, Shri Arjan Nath, was badly beaten. At Srinagar in the Chattabal area a druggist Shri Pushkar Nath's shop was looted. At Bijbehara there were assaults on Hindus and their houses were pelted with stones. A Hindu house was burnt at Pampore and others at Maratgam etc. An employee of the Forest Department sustained serious injuries. Earlier in Srinagar the shops of Lala Roroomal Rajkumar, Shridar joo and others at Maharaj Ganj, Sonamasjid, Fateh Kadal, Malik Angan etc. with stocks running into lacs, had been looted. A deputation of Beoparies (Traders) of Srinagar and Lala Roroomal waited upon Kh. Sadiq and narrated the woeful tale of this loot to him. It is sad that the Chief Minister at this occasion, instead of expressing sympathy with the sufferers, observed that the events here were not worse than those at 'Ranchi' and told them they could quit if they felt insecure.

The curfew was then imposed again with greater intensity, so much so that the newspapers of the Hindu Community remained unpublished since 3rd October. By 9th October, the State Government announced that the publication of the Daily Martand and the Weekly Jyoti and the Navjeevan (the only three papers of the Kashmiri Pandit community in Kashmir) alongwith three other weeklies, including one of the National Conference were banned. On the one hand the Government cried hoarse that only a section of Kashmiri Pandits was behind the last satyagraha, on the other the Government was so allergic as to ban the publication of all the newspapers of the community inclusive of the Martand, a Newspaper of 36 years, standing in Kashmir. A deputation of Action Committee met the Union Minister for information and Broad casting, Shri K. K. Shah, in this connection on 14th October, and explained to him the position. He assured that this would be looked into, but as to what he did to keep his promise is evident from the continued ban on the papers. The majority community became so bold as to intrude into the Hindu houses even

during day time. At Alikadal in one house three hooligans went up to the upper storey, caught hold of their unmarried girl of marriageable age, and tried to drag her down for being removed. Two other ladies in the house who came to her rescue were also dragged down-stairs, while wailing and crying aloud for help. Outside the premises a group of neighbours collected and rescued them when the intruders managed to snatch some of their gold ornaments bolt away.

There were explosions in the city also. One extra-ordinary loud explosion took place at Gadoodbagh, where the police was near the spot. At Barbooz-Kocha, Habakadal, a young boy accompanied by his mother was badly beaten and was caught by his throat till his watch and some cash was taken away. The Station police Officer was close by, but could not arrest the hooligan. We have reputable evidence of how some persons were paid thousands of rupees in Jammu for carrying on propaganda against Kashmir Hindus. Side by side with the purpose of creating discord in the ranks of the minority-Hindu and Sikhs-a self-styled Sikh leader was bribed from the secret fund to foment trouble and to undertake journeys to Delhi and to Amritsar and infuriate the Sikhs there, while a muslim sikh scuffle was fomented outside Amirakadal Gurdwara.

The Hindus of Jammu were publicly told that the Kashmiri Pandit Agitation was only to deprive them of their due share in services, with the malicious intention to create dissensions between Jammu & Kashmir Hindus.

Concurrently, the campaign of arrests re-started without any tangible reasons. While beyond 3rd September, 1967 the agitators were Muslims and not Hindus, arrests of Hindus were again made without warrants. Some Hindus whose shops had been looted were arrested when they went to make reports. A compounder was arrested while he was giving injection to a patient in his clinic.

A Hindu Forest Lessee was arrested because he dared to question the propriety of such arrests and the acts of hooliganism. In Baramulla four Hindus were arrested and their whereabouts could not be ascertained for over a week. Eventually they were traced to have been detained in the Pattan Police Station, where they have been subjected to great torture and when released were quite famished and emaciated.

During these days an incident of dreadful implications occurred in Village Katrsoo (Kulgam). The tenant tillers had refused to give the due share to their landlords.

The latter approached the Dy. Commissioner, Anantnagh for redress and he, in his turn, directed the Police to intervene. The landlords got their share with the assistance of the Police. Later when the law and order situation in the Valley deteriorated, the tenant tillers raided the houses of the landlords and took away the share of the produce back from them. A Naxalbari Bengal like incident, indeed.

The same time a party of Muslim students including some outsiders went from Srinagar to Kulgam, evidently at the instance of the 'Control Room' and along with many local students raided Hindu houses in villages of Bugam and khar Brari, looted them, dismantled two temples, molested girls and mercilessly beat a Hindu teacher, who had to be carried to Anantnagh Hospital. A medical shop of a Hindu was burnt along with his residential house at Doru, the home village of Syed Mir Qasim, Pradesh Congress Chief alleged brain behind the 'Control Room'.

Arrests of the members of the minority community were not only indiscriminate, but graceless too. Shri Tika Lal Tapiloo, an Advocate, was arrested in the court premises, while he was going to attend a case in the Court of Additional Munsiff. He was manhandled in such a manner that the Bar Association passed the following Resolution and sent it to the Chief Justice of the High Court :-

THE Bar Association Srinagar in an extraordinary meeting held today, 20th October, 1967 unanimously passed the following resolution. That the Bar Association views with great concern and alarm the deteriorating position of law and order especially among Police and Executive as exemplified in making arrests illegally and contrary to all provision of law. Today Shri Tika Lal Tapiloo, a lawyer of the Srinagar Court, while going to the court of Additional Munsiff to attend a case he had in that court was suddenly pounced upon by a posse of Police headed by A.S.P. without any notice or warrant, manhandled, assaulted and foully abused.

When he tried to protest that he was going to attend the court he was throttled & bodily lifted & thrown into a truck waiting there. This is not only extreme high handedness, disregard of all legal procedure & common decency, but a flagrant contempt of the court impeding and interfering in the administration of justice. This negates all rule of law and evidences the rule of jungle. The Association strongly condemns the manner and the method and the flagrant disregard of law and decency on the part of the Police and requests the intervention of the Govt. and Hon'ble high court to put a stop to all these condemnable practices on the part of the Police and take suitable action against these Police Officers to prevent any recurrence of such high handedness''.

The Police did not rest content with only arresting people in this manner. It started criminal cases also against some of them. The Police Station Bhanamohalla went to the Court under Section 186 R. P. C. against Shri Radha krishen Purbi, Autar Kishan Purbi and Naranjan Nath Kossa on the allegation that on 8th October, 1967, when the Police Party had gone to investigate the loot and arson of an earlier date, they had obstructed the work of Police by sounding couches. What a tragedy ! Even blowing of couches is not tolerated.

With the mouthpieces-the Martand, the Joyti & the Navjeevan of minority community gagged, it had become essential to send a deputation of the Action Committee again outside Kashmir to apprise people of revival of repression and suppression started in Jammu & Kashmir, & it met the Government & public Leaders. In Srinagar a deputation waited upon the Home Secretary, Shri L. P. Singh also, as well as Shri Bhardwaj of the Government of India information Department, who incidentally had come here and apprised them of the latest situation and the insecure condition/created by deterioration of Law & Order. In order to express resentment against the day to day happenings and the failure of Government to restore the abducted girl, a Dharna week from 20th to 26th October was observed at Shitalnath in which besides lady volunteers who fasted and sat for Dharna, thousands of people came for their darshan and participated in daily protest meetings, inspite of inclement weather and shivering cold. Shri Jagat Guru ShankerAcharya moved by the occurrences in Kashmir expressed his desire to come to Srinagar for an on-the-spot-assessment of the happenings. On this the

Chief Minister issued a statement. The Jagatguru commenting on the Chief Minister's statement said, that the statement of state Government about his proposed Kashmir tour, had made it abundantly clear that the State Government did not dare to let outsiders come to see for themselves as to what atrocities were perpetrated on the Kashmir minorities. He further observed, that the purpose of his proposed tour, that had not taken place had thus been served. The statement of the Chief Minister, according to the Jagat Guru was a clear evidence that a non-violent Sanyasi's tour to Kashmir appeared more dangerous to the Government than the mischief of the Pakistani infiltrators and hooligans. He made a demand that the Central Government should take adequate steps to protect the minorities.

When it was learnt that the A.I.C.C. was meeting at Jabalpur on 28th and 29th October, the Action Committee sent a deputation there to apprise the Congress members of the tragic happenings in Jammu & Kashmir, the woeful tale of the forcible conversion and abduction of a minor Hindu destitute girl, the worsening situation of law & order here visa-vis the minorities and the manoeuvres of the Ruling clique here to create communal tension in order to drown the peaceful non-violent protest of Kashmiri Hindus and side-track the main issue. The deputation furnished to them the available literature regarding the day to day happenings in the State with prayer that Kashmir be saved and due protection afforded to the minorities.

The Deepawali was a scene of mourning in Kashmir. When this festival of lights was being celebrated in all gaiety and joy in the rest of country, it was the most unlit night for Hindus in Kashmir and the minorities had a dark Deepawali dark because their future appears dark in the circumstances prevailing at present. In this month one Shri Pushkar Nath Vakeel announced to undertake self-immolation on 10th Nov. 1967, as a protest against the deteriorating situation of law and order and for restoration of the abducted girl, and further demanded guarantees for security of life, property and honour of the minorities here, but the Police arrested him.

The vicious circle of repression and suppression of the minority Community in Kashmir, which started with the abduction of the minor Hindu girl, Kumari Parmeshwari Handoo still continues and the abducted girl continues to be with the abductor, while in case of a Muslim girl, allegedly abducted in Bhadarwah (Jammu), after being traced out, was handed over to her natural guardian, as reported in a local paper 'Daily Aftab' of 24th October, 1967. what a contrast !

EPILOGUE

Kumari Parmeshwari Handoo's seduction, events leading to it, and the aftermath, in retrospect, are symbolic of present day Srinagar. And, Srinagar is synonymous with a morbid mentality developing progressively since 1947 in Kashmir—a multilingual, multiracial, multicultural, and multireligious border Province of India where Five International State boundaries converge. And again, the Union Government in its idealism has made a mess of the situation which Lt. General B. M. Kaul in his "Untold Story" depicts, in agony as :-

IN fact we fought shy of facing facts in Kashmir. Even after prolonged mismanagement of affairs, which had prevailed in the State, we did not send the cream of dedicated, competent and honest administrators from other parts of India, incapable of being subverted to the generous local hospitality, who could set things right in Kashmir. We shelved decisions on many matters in that province for years on end, as we were afraid of repercussions. This attitude helped no one following a policy of drift all along while the situation required firm handling.

WE have not implemented our policies in Kashmir vigorously. Till this is done, we will continue to have trouble."

Pandit Jawaher Lal Nehru in the foreword on the 1962 Edition of his autobiography brought out a historical truism : "There is a connecting link and in order to understand the India of today, we have to have some understanding of what preceded it and what gave rise to it," This truism is universally applicable to all countries or component parts of a country. And, therefore, to Kashmir. But, one is confronted with the difficulty of defining what Kashmir is. It may look curious to hazard a definition, Kashmir as a name having been much advertised. Is it the Kashmir Valley? No, it is not that only, though it is the core of the complex. A border State is at the best of times a tricky affair, and Kashmir is particularly so. The Britisher had by 1935 pressurized the then Maharaja to cede Gilgit Agency on 60 years' lease. In 1947 when the British Indian Empire collapsed, the British officers (Lt. Brown and others) headed the Scouts' revolt in Gilgit to secure Gilgit as a military base through Pakistan agency. The second horn of this dilemma of the border state is, Ladakh is piercing another border enemy's heart. With these historical links the

Kashmir Valley; the real base of the problem is progressively breeding anti-Indian bias. Upto 1947 the political movement was to oust the Hindu Maharaja and having achieved this under the cloak of nationalism Sheikh Abdullah by 1953 began showing his fangs. The revenue of the J & K Dharmarth Trust was held up to collapse it, the Dharmarth lands were usurped e.g. to erect Food Control Deptt. Annexe, Hindu property was usurped to build upon for the Muslim Auqaf e.g. Auqaf Buildings, near Badshah Bridge; the grants of the Aided Schools, a predominantly Hindu activity, were stoped; agriculturists were deprived of their land without compensation; interest-bearing loans were written off likewise to the detriment of minorities; industrial concerns owned by industrialists like Shri A. K. Wattal and Raja Upendra Kishen Koul e.g. Karan Singh Woollen Mills, the Kailash Carpet Factory & Kashmir match Factory, Artemesia unit at Baramulla, were pressurized to be surrendered, etc. etc. We leave it to Dr. Karan Singh to come out with the untold story regarding the renting out of the Palaces to the Oberoi Hotel and giving his estate at Nasim Bagh, Srinagar for the Jammu & Kashmir University,

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad in a very difficult situation kept his apple cart from upsetting by bribing the anti-national elements with a boost in commerce, public works, transport facilities, educational loans, increase in wages and salaries, heavily subsidized food, weightage in services, etc. Khwaja Ghulam Mohamad Sadiq helplessly played into the hands of the communalist 'Control Room' behind this farce of a Government. The veil between the party and the Government is incredibly thin. Who governs the State "the Chief Minister or the Control Room" is anybody's guess. This is symbolic of Srinagar.

Another aspect of Kashmir came to limelight during the last four months and that is the attitude of the unsophisticated masses of the majority community. They have still that undercurrent of good neighbourliness and inter-communal tolerance. It is the politicians who touch their Islamic sentiments and foment trouble. There is still fundamental cultural basis among the masses for the Indian leaders, both Hindus and Muslims, to take conscious and far-sighted measures to educate the people that secular democracy is not mobocracy but a popular government through competent representatives who are above "isms".

Otherwise, Pakistan propaganda over the Radio and through its paid agents in Kashmir is undermining the very idea of a Secular State. As literacy increases the youngmen are injected communal virus.

Facts of the abduction case have become history now. Having conceded in the State Assembly the mistake in its initial handling, the Government under pressure from the communalist members failed to take rectifying action. The speeches of the Chief Minister, Khwaja Gulam Mohamad Sadiq, the Ex-Chief Minister, Khwaja Shamus-u-din, the Pradesh Congress Chief, Syed Mir Qasim and the Secretary Plebiscit Front, Mr. Shamim Ahmad Shamim M. L. A., leave no doubt as to the working of the morbid mind. No person with an iota of humanity or culture should have subscribed to the statement in "The real picture in Srinagar", presented to the Union Home minister in Srinagar on 2nd September, 1967. Seduction is not spiritualised by owning it as conversion. Syed Mir Qasim had kudos in the Assembly for Mr. Shamim for having contacted the seduced girl at dead of night in mysterious circumstances and found out that in her childhood she was enamoured of Islam, and had married Ghulam Rassol Kanth now as the only course, left to her to escape the wrath of "Kafirs". This is symbolic of present day Srinagar.

On the advice of the Chief Minister the widow mother of the minor girl went to law in August, 1967. Two judges both the products of this mentality—in the courts of the Additional District Magistrate and the sessions have come into this gloomy episode so far. The case is now to go to the High Court for discussion on the very preliminaries. The attitude has so far been to block, hinder and delay the case so that eventually the minor seduced girl attains majority by 28th July, 1968. Preachers of the Tablig Organisations by then will have played the trick with Kumari Parmeshwari and the whole episode will be over. Even Mahatma Gandhi's eldest son Shri Hira Lal, could not stand the temptations and overtures of the Christian and the Muslim missionaries. This denial, by delay, of Justice is another symbol of Srinagar.

The Kashmiri Pandit is "taken-for-granted" by the Government at the State level and at the centre, by the majority community, or by anybody who



SHAHEED
HARDEY NATH MATTOO
(Rainawari)



First Satyagrahi Jatha for Tihar Jail: Hira Lal Chatta, Ashok Braroo
Surinder Kuchroo & others.



Inside Tihar Barrack



Matree Shakthi on way
for Satyagrah



Outside Tihar Barrack: Hardey Nath Bhat (*Rainawari*)
in chair with H.L. Chatta & others

